

MARVEL

VENOM



THE LAND WHERE KILLERS DWELL

BUNN • CHECCHETTO • LARRAZ • JACINTO • COELHO



VENOM

**THE LAND WHERE
KILLERS DWELL**



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MARVEL

1

27.1

BUNN

CHECCHETTO

D'AURIA

VENOM



Eugene "Flash" Thompson was a high-school-bully-turned war hero, inspired by the Amazing Spider-Man to get his act together. When he lost both legs in combat, his country gave him a chance to serve again, bonding him with the alien parasite suit that grants its host powers similar to Spider-Man. From that day on, he was the Secret Avenger known as...

VENOM

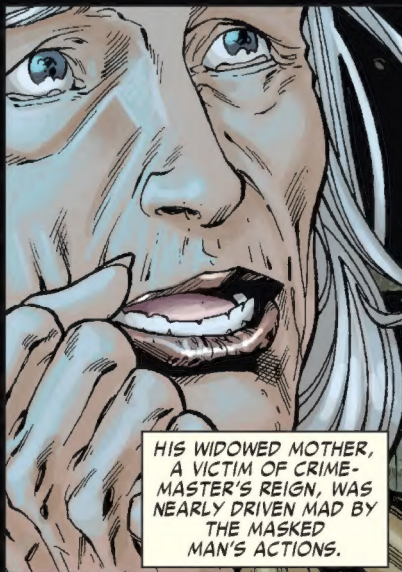
PREVIOUSLY...



AGENT VENOM WAS SENT ON ASSIGNMENT TO A PRISON BREAKOUT IN COLORADO. HE WAS HAVING A BAD YEAR WELL BEFORE THAT...



...THE MANIACAL CRIME-MASTER DISCOVERED HIS IDENTITY, TORTURED HIS FAMILY AND TRIED TO KILL HIM.



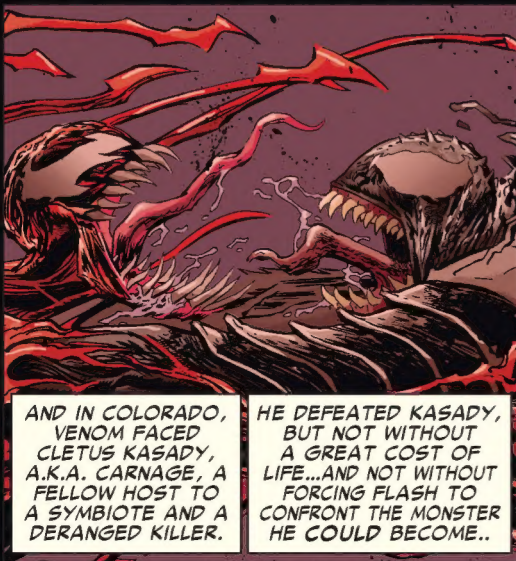
HIS WIDOWED MOTHER, A VICTIM OF CRIME-MASTER'S REIGN, WAS NEARLY DRIVEN MAD BY THE MASKED MAN'S ACTIONS.



HIS THEN-GIRLFRIEND, BETTY BRANT, DISCOVERED HIS DUAL LIFE, AND FOR HER OWN SAFETY ENDED HER RELATIONSHIP WITH FLASH.



HE RECENTLY DEFEATED DAIMON HELLSTROM, THE SON OF SATAN, BUT HELLSTROM DETECTED AN EVIL POWER INSIDE VENOM.



AND IN COLORADO, VENOM FACED CLETUS KASADY, A.K.A. CARNAGE, A FELLOW HOST TO A SYMBIOTE AND A DERANGED KILLER.

HE DEFEATED KASADY, BUT NOT WITHOUT A GREAT COST OF LIFE...AND NOT WITHOUT FORCING FLASH TO CONFRONT THE MONSTER HE COULD BECOME..

THE EVIL INSIDE US ALL...

CULLEN BUNN
writer

MARCO CHECCHETTO
art

FABIO D'AURIA
color art

UC's JOE CARAMAGNA
letters

JOE QUINONES
cover

TOM BRENNAN
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chief creative officer

DAN BUCKLEY
publisher

ALAN FINE
exec. producer

Athol,
Massachusetts.

HERE'S
MY OFFER...
TAKE IT OR
LEAVE IT...

YOU GUYS
TELL ME WHAT
I WANT TO KNOW,
AND I'LL STOP
PUNCHING
YOU.

IN TEN TO
TWENTY YEARS,
YOUR WHOLE GANG
WILL BE OUT OF
PRISON...

...AND YOU
CAN GO BACK TO
LOWERING THE I.Q. OF
MOSH PITS, BREWING
MOONSHINE, AND...I
DUNNO...DATING YOUR
SIBLINGS.

SOUND
FAIR?

ICE THIS
FREAK!

GUESS
NOT.

MY NAME IS
EUGENE "FLASH"
THOMPSON.

ONCE UPON A TIME...
I THOUGHT DEVIL-
WORSHIPPING CULTS WERE
JUST THE STUFF OF
GHOST STORIES.

SOMETHING TO
SCARE THE GIRLS...TO
ENCOURAGE THEM TO
SNUGGLE UP CLOSE
ON CHILLY NIGHTS.

**BLAM!
B-BLAM!
BLAM!**

THESE DAYS, I'M A
SOLDIER, A SECRET AGENT,
AND WEAR A SHAPE-
SHIFTING ALIEN SUIT THAT
HELPS ME DO THIS.

AND SECTS LIKE
THE HARKSPUR
BROOD ARE ALL
TOO REAL...AND
ALL TOO COMMON.

**BLAM!
B-BLAM!
BLAM!**

MY "SUIT" OF ALIEN
FLESH COMES FULLY
LOADED WITH A WIDE
ASSORTMENT OF
EXTRA-HUMAN ABILITIES.

THE SYMBIOTE
AND ME...
TOGETHER...
WE'RE CALLED
VENOM.

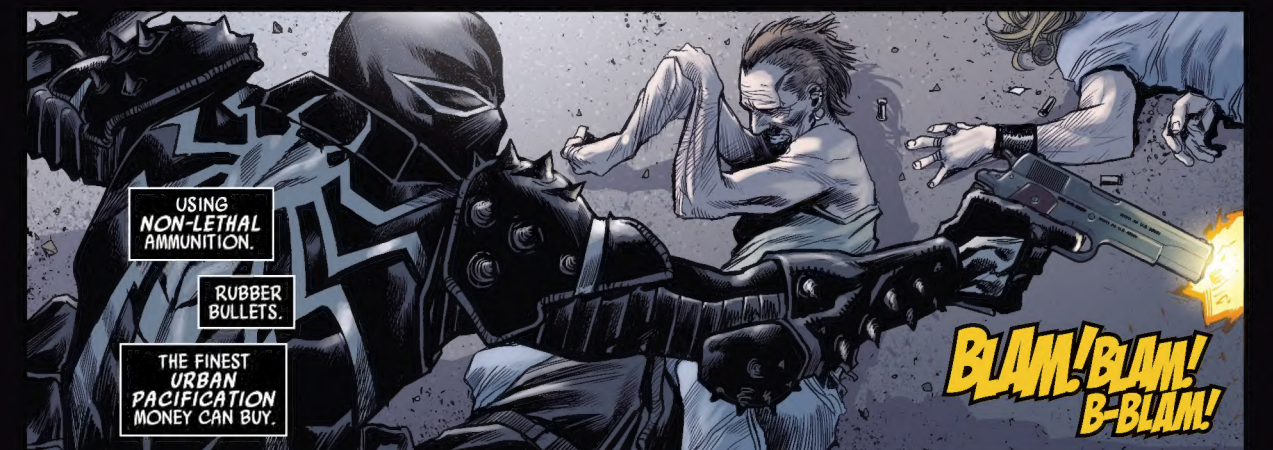
AAAGH!

P-PLEASE...
AGH...I DON'T...
I DON'T
KNOW...

ONE OF
YOU REDNECK
FREAKS BETTER
START TALKING...
FAST...OR
I'LL...

REEEAAAAGGGHHH!

**SHR-
CRACK!**



USING
NON-LETHAL
AMMUNITION.

RUBBER
BULLETS.

THE FINEST
URBAN
PACIFICATION
MONEY CAN BUY.

**BLAM! BLAM!
B-BLAM!**



I CAN'T
INTERROGATE
THEM IF THEY'RE
DEAD.

IF I KILL
THEM...

...THEY
WON'T FEEL
A THING.



PROBLEM IS...EVEN
THOUGH I'M ASKING...
I DON'T WANT TO
HEAR WHAT THEY HAVE
TO SAY...DON'T WANT
TO STOP HITTING THEM.

THEY'RE BAD
PEOPLE. THEY
DESERVE THIS
BEATING.



I...I'LL
COOPERATE!
I SWEAR!

TOO
LATE.

WHEN THEY WAKE UP IN
A COLD SWEAT IN THE
DEAD OF NIGHT, I WANT
IT TO BE MY FACE THAT
HAUNTS THEM.



HRRK!

CHUNK!



"AGENT
VENOM...
WHAT'S
WRONG?"

"YOU SEEM
POSITIVELY
ON EDGE."

The Raft. Maximum Security Prison.

"DID THE HARKSPUR
BROOD SCURRY OFF
INTO ANOTHER ONE OF
THEIR HIDEY HOLES?"

"I WARNED
YOU THEY WERE
A SLIPPERY
BUNCH.."

I FOUND
THEM,
HELLSTROM,
JUST LIKE
YOU SAID.

EXCELLENT.
MY REPUTATION
AS AN INFORMANT
REMAINS
INTACT.

CAN'T
SAY
THEY WERE
HELPFUL.

THEY DIDN'T
KNOW ANYTHING
ABOUT...UH...
UNDERWORLD
PERSONNEL
CHANGES.

AND WHEN I SAY
"UNDERWORLD,"
I MEAN IN THE
BIBLICAL SENSE.

THE **DESCENT**. A
BUNCH OF--GET
THIS--DEMONS AND
DEVILS SELECTING
SUCCESSORS TO
TAKE THEIR PLACE.

I'M ON THE NOMINATION
BLOCK, ALONG WITH **DAIMON**
HELLSTROM AND WHO
KNOWS HOW MANY OTHERS.

WHY DO
I FEEL LIKE
YOU'RE STILL
PLAYING GAMES
WITH ME?

NO
GAMES.

IT'S NOT
SURPRISING
THAT THEY
WERE IN THE
DARK.

NOT EVERY
D.O.A. CELL IS
PRIVY TO THOSE
DIRTY LITTLE
SECRETS.

HELLSTROM BETRAYED
EVERYTHING HE STOOD
FOR TO MAKE SURE HE'S
CHOSEN INSTEAD OF
SOMEONE REALLY...**AWFUL**.

LESSER OF TWO EVILS...CHANGE
THE SYSTEM FROM THE INSIDE...
OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT...

...OR MAYBE
HE'S JUST
AN @#%\$.

LOOK AT
THE BRIGHT SIDE.
YOU APPREHENDED
A GROUP OF
DANGEROUS
CRIMINALS...

...AND A
FEW MORE
PAWNS ARE
OFF THE
BOARD.



STOP
SMILING!

AFTER
WHAT YOU
DID...

TRYING TO
POSSESS ME...
PUTTING A
DEMON INSIDE
ME...

YOU DON'T
GET TO TREAT
ME LIKE SOME
CLUELESS ERRAND
BOY!

SHH-WHAM!

YOU'LL FIND
THAT PLAYING THE
MARTYR ONLY EVER
REALLY WORKED FOR
ONE PERSON IN ALL
OF HISTORY.

I'M SURE
YOU USED ALL
YOUR VERY BEST
CHARACTER TRAITS
TO PERSUADE THOSE
HARKSPUR CURS TO
ANSWER YOUR
QUESTIONS.

THOSE
SAME TACTICS,
THOUGH, DON'T
RATTLE ME.

WE NEED
EACH OTHER,
YOU AND I. SO WE
SHOULD AT LEAST
BE CIVIL.



ALAS!

IT APPEARS
TODAY'S VISIT
WILL BE CUT
SHORT.

AGENT
VENOM!

STEP
AWAY FROM
THE
GLASS!



I WORRY ABOUT
YOU, AGENT VENOM.
I REALLY DO.

YOU SEEM
DISTRACTED...
RESTLESS...
AGITATED.

IS
EVERYTHING
ALL RIGHT
AT HOME?

"I HOPE YOU'RE NOT BURDENED BY ANY FAMILY DRAMA."

Upstate New York.

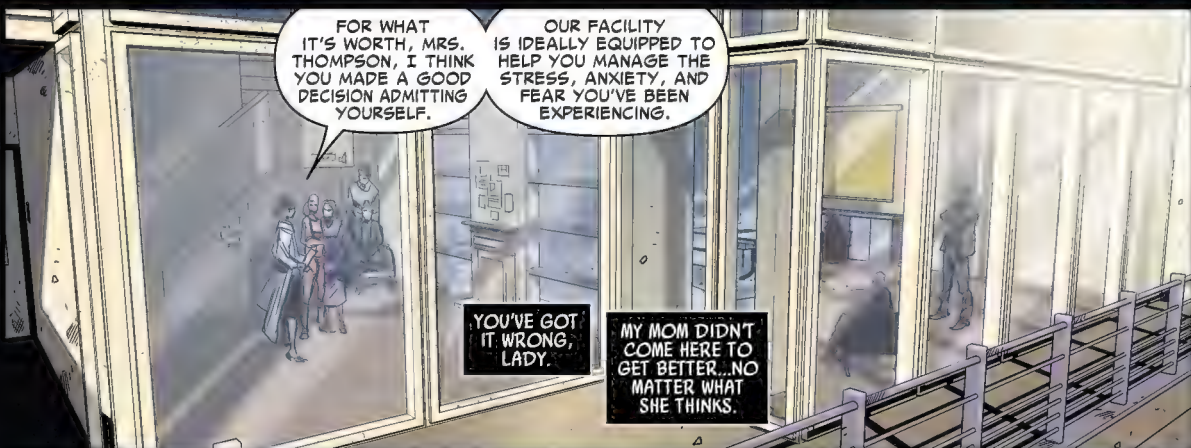


FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH, MRS. THOMPSON, I THINK YOU MADE A GOOD DECISION ADMITTING YOURSELF.

OUR FACILITY IS IDEALLY EQUIPPED TO HELP YOU MANAGE THE STRESS, ANXIETY, AND FEAR YOU'VE BEEN EXPERIENCING.

YOU'VE GOT IT WRONG, LADY.

MY MOM DIDN'T COME HERE TO GET BETTER...NO MATTER WHAT SHE THINKS.



YOU'LL WORK WITH A TEAM OF COUNSELORS TO DEVELOP AN INDIVIDUALIZED COURSE OF TREATMENT.

AND WE ALSO HAVE A NUMBER OF GROUP ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES SCHEDULED THROUGHOUT THE WEEK.

SHE CAME HERE TO GET LOST...TO HIDE.



WE OFFER A PEACEFUL, NURTURING ENVIRONMENT TO FACILITATE YOUR RECOVERY WHILE MAKING SURE YOU HAVE ALL THE AMENITIES OF HOME.

AND ALLOW ME TO SAY THAT IT'S SO NICE TO SEE THAT YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS SUPPORT YOUR CHOICES.

HMMPH...

SHE'S HIDING FROM ME.



FROM
VENOM.



THANKS FOR COMING ALONG, PETE. I KNOW IT'S A PAIN, BUT IT MEANS A LOT.

IT'S FUNNY, Y'KNOW?

FOR SO LONG, I THOUGHT I'D BE THE ONE WHO'D END UP IN REHAB. I NEVER EXPECTED MY MOM...



WITH ALL SHE'S BEEN THROUGH...LOSING YOUR DAD...THE RECENT ATTACKS...IT'S NO WONDER SHE WANTS TO LEVEL OUT.

PEOPLE BOUNCE BACK FROM THIS SORT OF THING.

SHE'LL BOUNCE BACK.



SPEAKING OF...
...UH...

I HEARD FROM SOMEONE FROM THE...UH...I GUESS FROM THE GOOD OLD DAYS.

A.J. PATTON.



A.J.?

HE JUST MOVED BACK TO THE CITY.

I WASN'T SURE IF I SHOULD TELL YOU OR NOT. YOU KNOW, WITH ALL THAT'S GOING ON.

BUT HE MENTIONED YOU... SAID YOU SHOULD GET IN TOUCH...IF YOU WANTED.

New York, New York.

CAN'T BLAME MOM
FOR NEEDING
SOME...TIME...TO
COLLECT HERSELF.

WHEN CRIME-MASTER
AND HIS SAVAGE SIX
CAME AFTER ME, SHE
SAW VENOM AT HIS
CRUELEST.

SCARED...CONFUSED
...ANGRY. I LET THE
MONSTER OFF THE
CHAIN...RIGHT IN
FRONT OF HER.

NOW...LIKE THE "BAD
PEOPLE" WITH THEIR
BRUISES AND BROKEN
BONES...SHE SEES
VENOM'S FACE WHENEVER
SHE'S AFRAID.

SEE VENOM
ISSUES #17-22
--TOM.

BEING HAUNTED
LIKE THAT...
HAUNTED BY THE
MONSTER...DROVE
HER TO ROSE
MANOR.

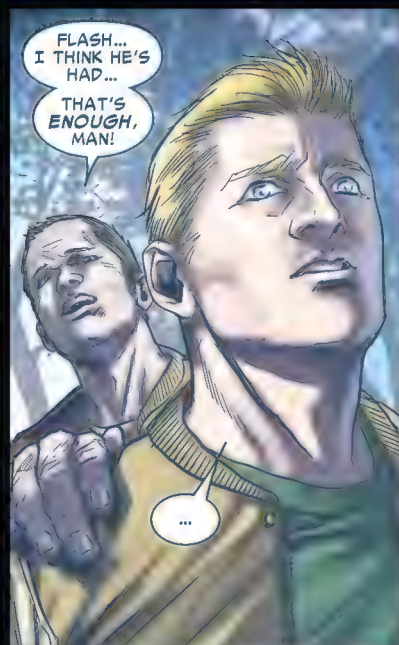
BUT A.J.
PATTON...

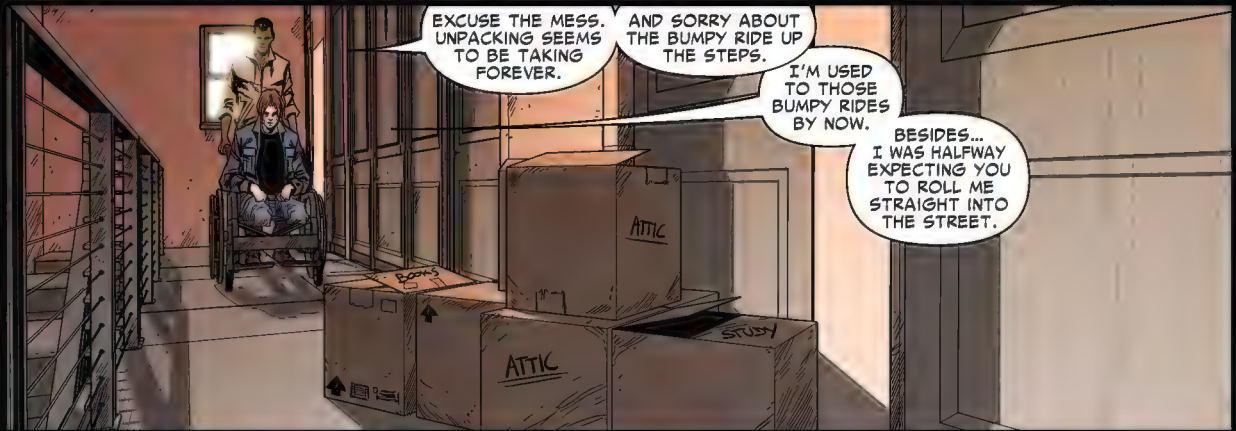
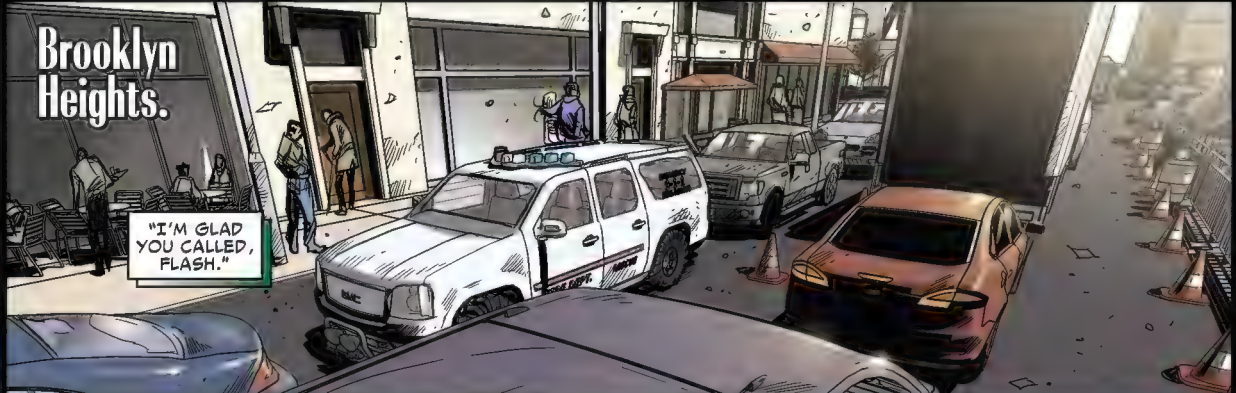
IT WOULDN'T
SURPRISE ME IF IT
WAS FLASH
THOMPSON'S FACE
THAT GAVE HIM
NIGHTMARES.

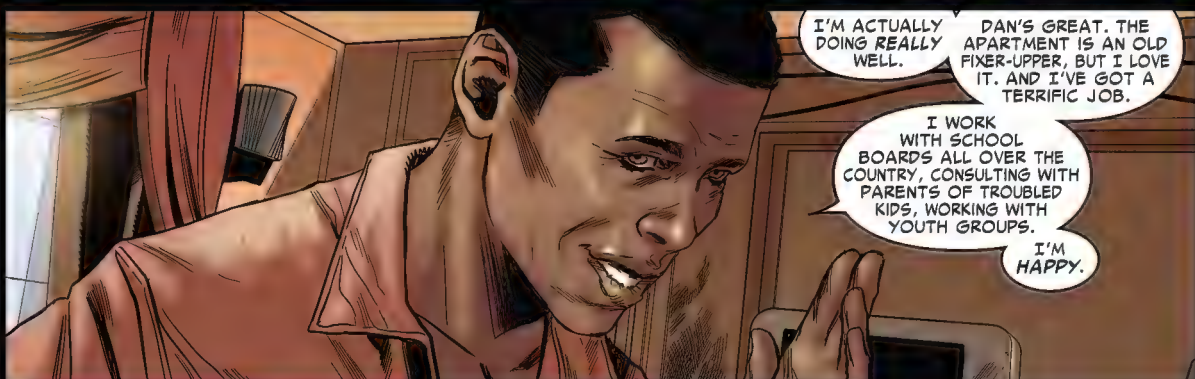
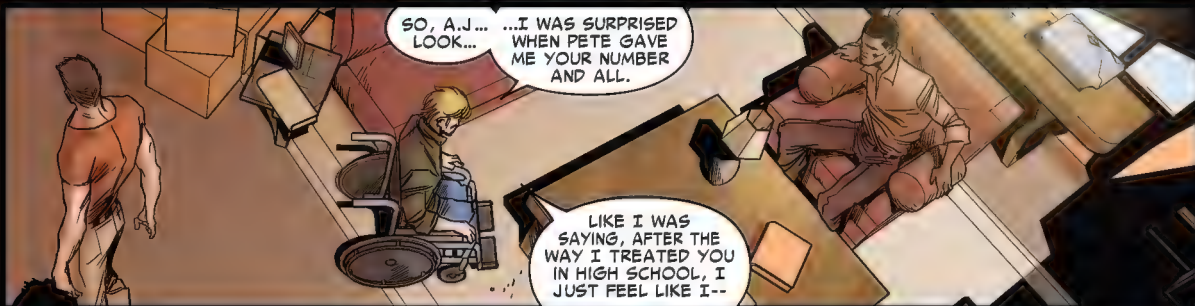
I DIDN'T CARE THAT A.J.
WAS GAY. HELL...BACK
THEN, I'M NOT EVEN SURE
I FULLY UNDERSTOOD
WHAT THAT EVEN MEANT.

I ONLY CARED
THAT I WAS
ANGRY.

ALWAYS
ANGRY.





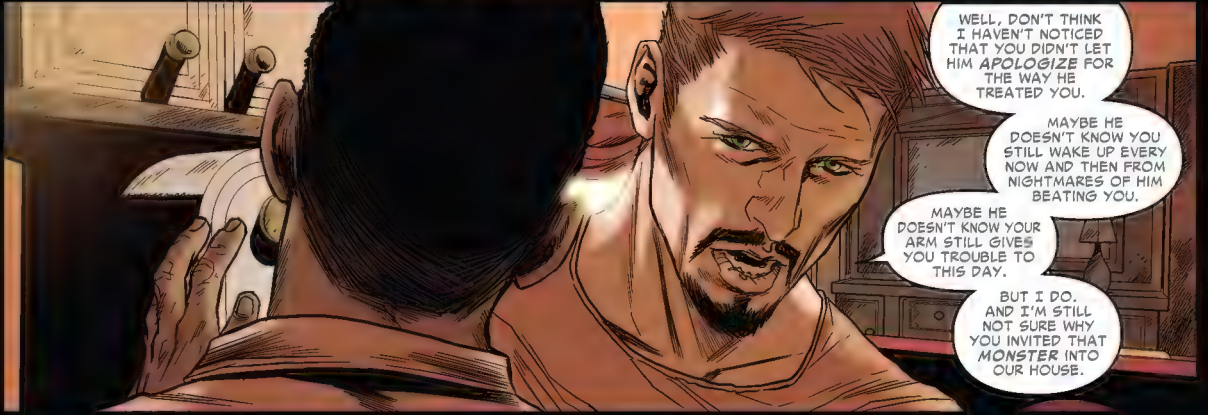






I JUST WANT TO MAKE SURE YOU'RE DOING ALL RIGHT WITH THIS.

I'M FINE, REALLY.

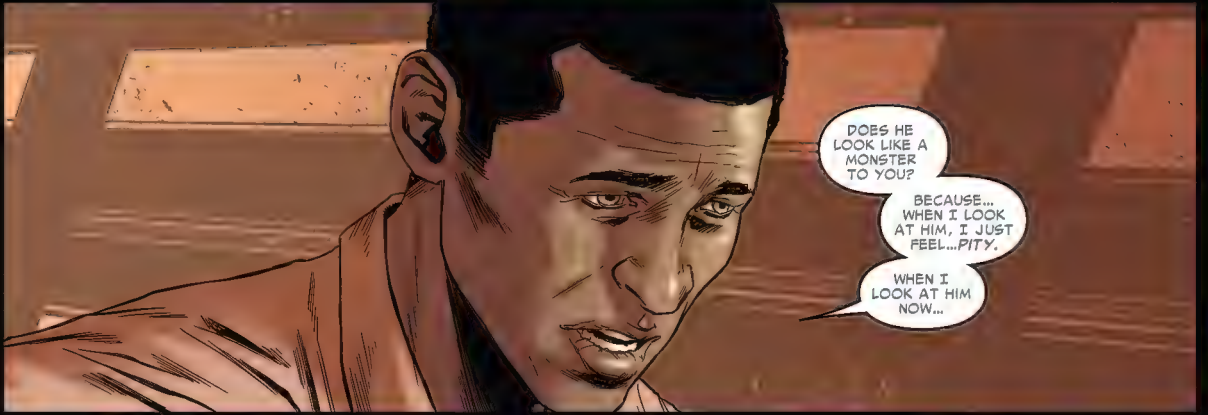


WELL, DON'T THINK I HAVEN'T NOTICED THAT YOU DIDN'T LET HIM APOLOGIZE FOR THE WAY HE TREATED YOU.

MAYBE HE DOESN'T KNOW YOU STILL WAKE UP EVERY NOW AND THEN FROM NIGHTMARES OF HIM BEATING YOU.

MAYBE HE DOESN'T KNOW YOUR ARM STILL GIVES YOU TROUBLE TO THIS DAY.

BUT I DO. AND I'M STILL NOT SURE WHY YOU INVITED THAT MONSTER INTO OUR HOUSE.



DOES HE LOOK LIKE A MONSTER TO YOU?

BECAUSE... WHEN I LOOK AT HIM, I JUST FEEL...PITY.

WHEN I LOOK AT HIM NOW...



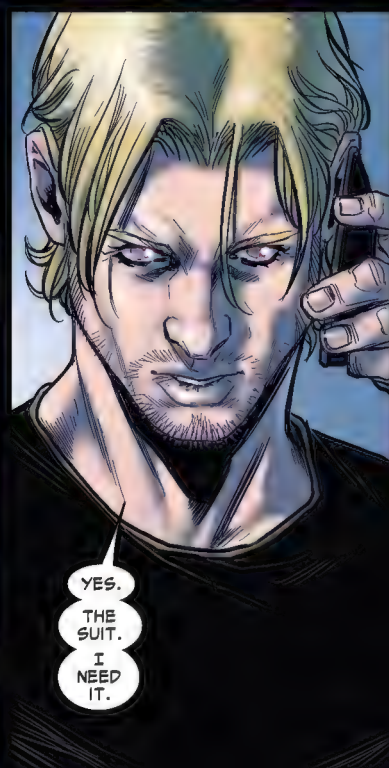
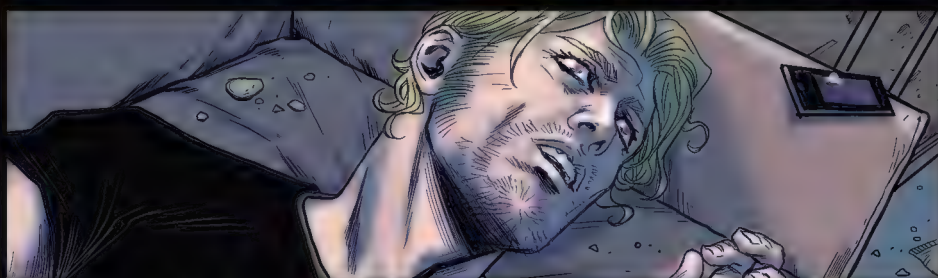
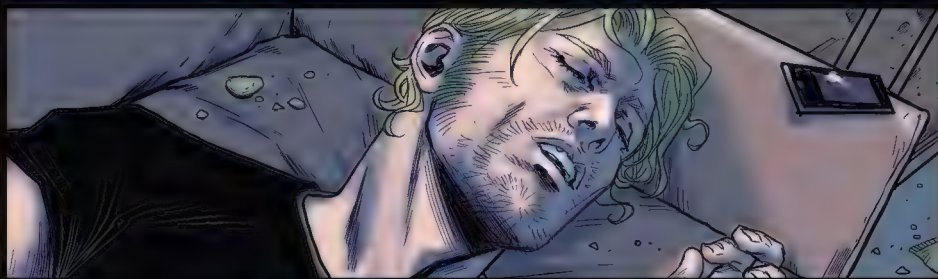
...ALL I SEE IS A BROKEN-DOWN WASH-OUT.

THEY'RE WHISPERING... AND I APPRECIATE IT... BUT THE PLACE ISN'T THAT BIG, SOUND CARRIES...

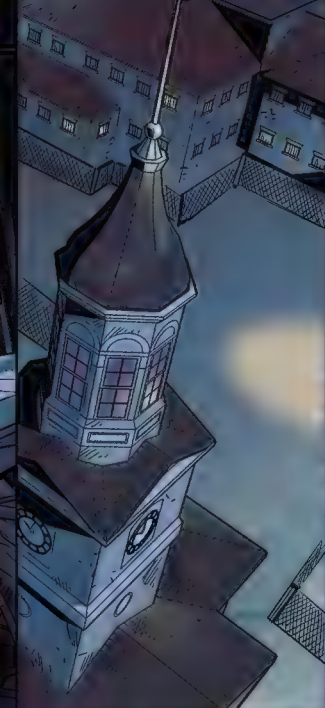


...AND I'M SITTING RIGHT HERE.

RIGHT
HERE.



YES.
THE
SUIT.
I
NEED
IT.



North Central Correctional Institute.
Gardner, Massachusetts.





YOU DIDN'T
THINK YOU'D
SEEN THE LAST
OF ME, DID
YOU?

NO, NO,
NO...

WE PLAYED
A LITTLE BIT...
BUT NOW I'M
BACK FOR
MORE.

BACK
TO FINISH
WHAT I
STARTED.



I...I
ALREADY
TOLD YOU.

I DON'T
KNOW
ANYTHING
ABOUT--



MMMMPH!

AH AH
AH...

WHEN I
WANT TO HEAR
YOUR TONGUE
WAGGING, I'LL RIP
IT OUT AND STITCH
IT TO A DOG'S
TAIL.

SP
FLK
K?





PLEASE...
...PLEASE...

SKRTCH!
SKRTCH!
SKRTCH!



...GO AWAY.

SKRTCH!
SKRTCH!



AWWWW...
YOU DON'T WANT ME TO COME INSIDE?
TO TUCK YOU IN?

SLLLLLEGGKK



DON'T MIND ME, THEN.

I'LL JUST STAY HERE FOR A LITTLE WHILE AND WATCH YOU.



I'LL WATCH YOU SLEEPING.

PLEASE.
GO AWAY.

The Next Day...

NO OFFENSE, FLASH, BUT YOU LOOK LIKE HELL. ARE YOU GETTING ENOUGH SLEEP?

I DUNNO, PETE.

I CRASHED EARLY LAST NIGHT, BUT I FEEL LIKE I DIDN'T SLEEP A WINK.

NO REST FOR THE WICKED, I GUESS.

LISTEN, PETE. MEETING WITH A.J. THE OTHER DAY GOT ME THINKING.

YOU'RE MY BEST FRIEND, AND I'M--

WELL, I DON'T SAY IT OFTEN ENOUGH, BUT I'M PROUD OF YOU.

CAREFUL, ALL-STAR. YOU'RE STARTING TO SOUND LIKE AUNT MAY.

ALL I'M SAYING IS...YOU'RE OUT THERE EVERY DAY, BEING BRILLIANT.

YOU'VE COME A LONG WAY FROM THAT PUNY LITTLE WIMP BACK IN HIGH SCHOOL.

YOU'RE A REAL SUCCESS STORY.

YOU KNOW COMPLIMENTS MAKE ME UNEASY, RIGHT?

WHAT I KNOW IS I WAS A REAL JACKASS TO YOU IN SCHOOL.

I'M SORRY FOR THE WAY I PICKED ON YOU.

BUT YOU TURNED OUT ALL RIGHT.

I MEAN, IT WASN'T SO BAD, RIGHT? I DIDN'T MESS YOU UP FOR LIFE OR ANYTHING.

...

FLASH.

I'M...I'M JUST GONNA COME OUT AND SAY THIS, I GUESS.

YOU WERE AWFUL.

THERE WERE DAYS I WANTED TO FAKE BEING SICK JUST SO I DIDN'T HAVE TO GO TO SCHOOL.

AND I LOVED SCHOOL.

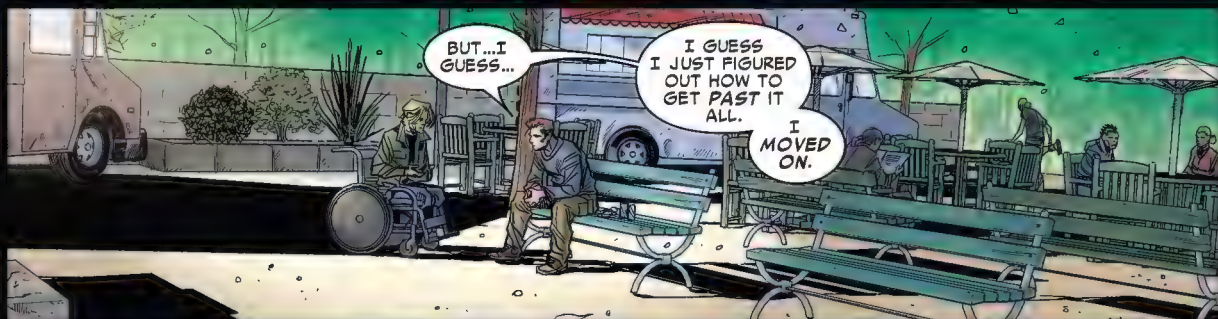
I JUST...I JUST COULDN'T BEAR THE THOUGHT OF WALKING THROUGH THOSE DOORS AND FACING...

...YOU.



THERE WERE WEEKS ON END WHEN I DIDN'T GO TO THE RESTROOM BECAUSE I WAS AFRAID I'D FIND YOU WAITING FOR ME IN THERE.

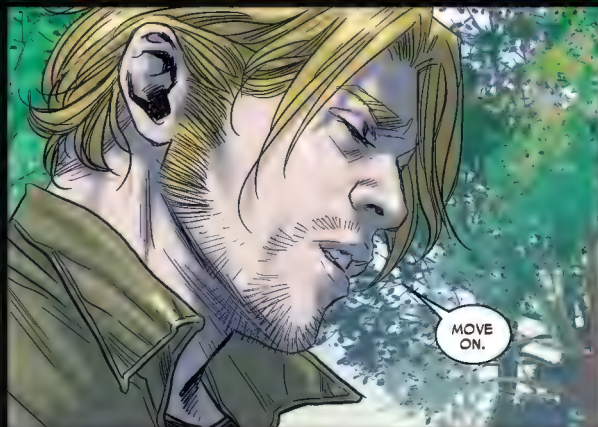
I ATE LUNCH ALONE... HIDING IN A CLASSROOM... BECAUSE I DIDN'T WANT YOU PICKING ON ME IN THE CAFETERIA.



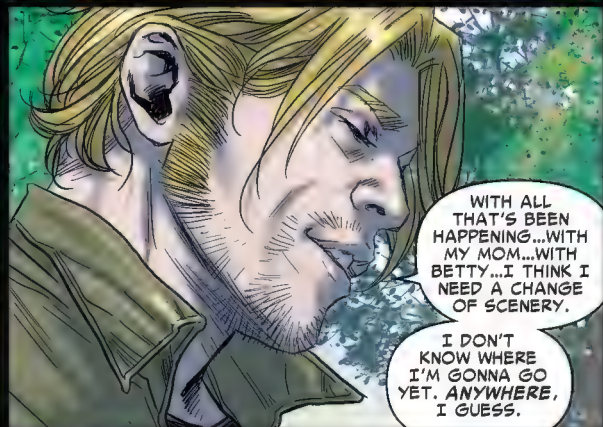
BUT...I GUESS...

I GUESS I JUST FIGURED OUT HOW TO GET PAST IT ALL.

I MOVED ON.



MOVE ON.



WITH ALL THAT'S BEEN HAPPENING...WITH MY MOM...WITH BETTY...I THINK I NEED A CHANGE OF SCENERY.

I DON'T KNOW WHERE I'M GONNA GO YET. ANYWHERE, I GUESS.



BUT I'M LEAVING NEW YORK, PETE.

AND I'M NOT COMING BACK.



SYMBIOWROTE

TOM BRENNAN
EDITOR

STEPHEN WACKER
SENIOR EDITOR

AXEL ALONSO
EDITOR IN CHIEF

JOE QUESADA
CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER

DAN BUCKLEY
PUBLISHER

ALAN FINE
EXEC. PRODUCER

NEXT: PHILADELPHIA, HERE WE COME!



IN VENOM #28, ON SALE IN DECEMBER!

ARKTECH

VENOM



MARVEL

**BUNN
LARRAZ
LOUGHRIDGE**

036

Eugene "Flash" Thompson was a high-school-bully-turned-war-hero, inspired by the amazing Spider-Man to get his act together. When he lost both legs in combat, his country gave him a chance to serve again, bonding him with the alien parasite suit that grants its host powers similar to Spider-Man. From that day on, he was the Secret Avenger known as...

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JOE QUESADA
chief creative officer

DAN BUCKLEY
publisher

ALAN FINE
exec. producer

Monday.

A PERSON CAN GO AN
ENTIRE LIFETIME WITHOUT
ACCURATELY IDENTIFYING
THEIR *SHTICK*.



THAT ONE THING
THAT MAKES THEM
TRULY SPECIAL.



Tuesday.

AND I HAVEN'T ALWAYS
KNOWN WHAT SET ME
APART FROM THE
COMPETITION.



WHAT
MAKES ME
SPECIAL?



Wednesday.

AM I A FORMER HIGH SCHOOL ALL-STAR? AN INJURED VET? A HERO?

A MONSTER?

IS IT THE ALIEN SYMBIOTE THAT'S BONDED TO ME LIKE A SOUPED-UP PARASITE?

Thursday.

IT TOOK A LOT OF TIME, AND MORE THAN A FEW HEADACHES...

...BUT I FINALLY FIGURED OUT THE GIMMICK THAT'S DEFINED WHO I AM FOR SO LONG.

Friday.

I'M STARTING A
NEW LIFE...AND
EVERY SECOND OF
EVERY DAY...

...I'M TERRIFIED OF
OVERCOMPLICATING
THE @%% OUT OF IT!

Saturday.

THAT SEEMS TO
BE MY GIFT.

OF COURSE, NOW
THAT I RECOGNIZE
THAT TRAIT...

...IT'S TIME FOR
A LITTLE COURSE
CORRECTION.

Sunday.

KEEP IT
SIMPLE.

THAT'S MY NEW
MOTTO.

THE
STRAIGHTFORWARD
APPROACH WORKS
BEST.

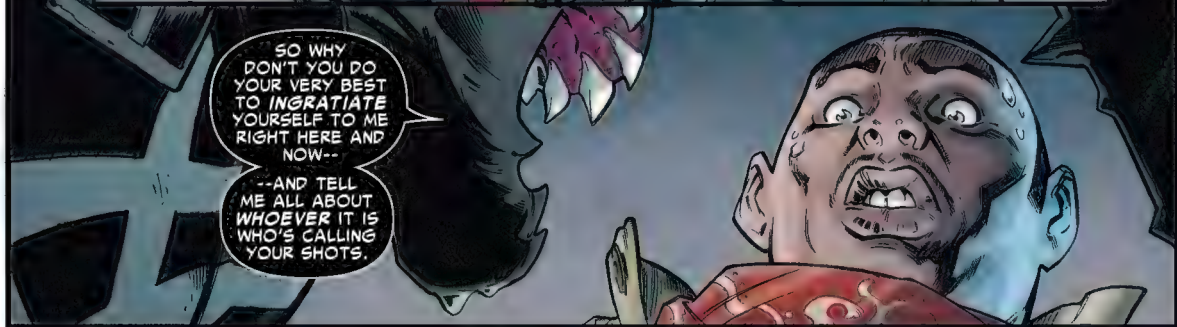
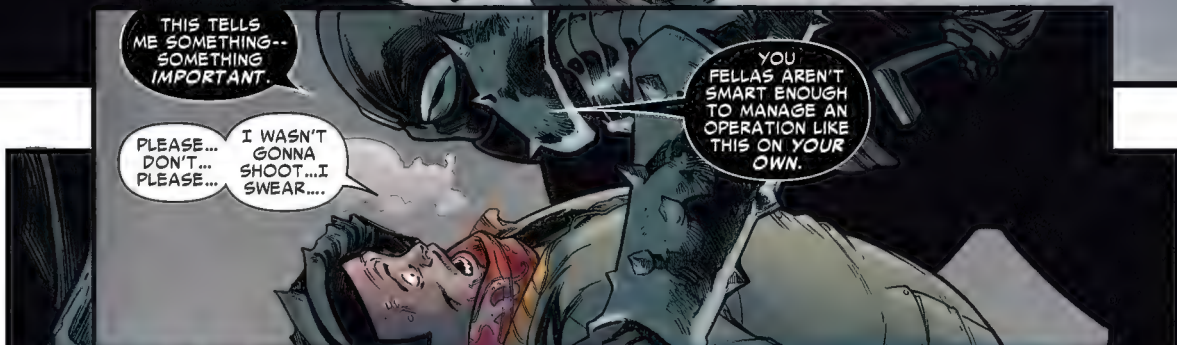
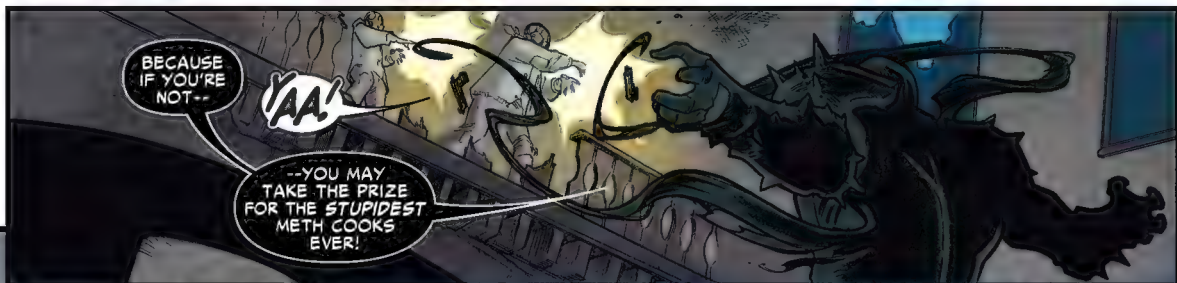
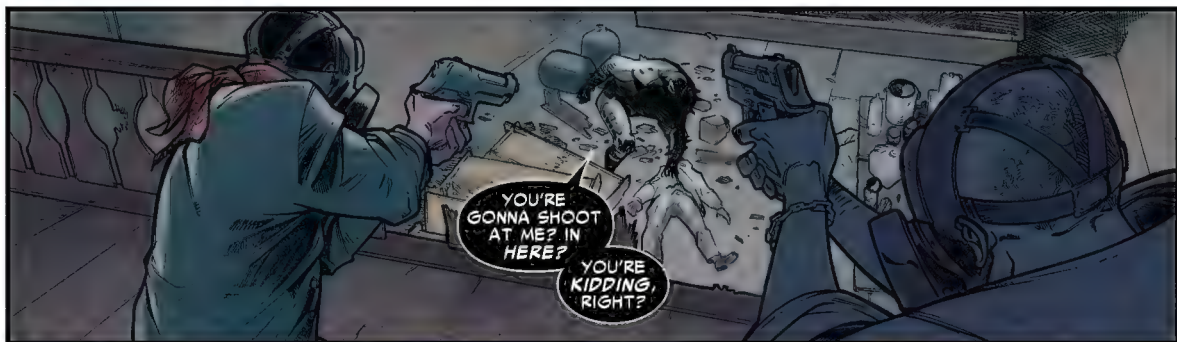
MY NAME IS
EUGENE "FLASH"
THOMPSON.

OTHERWISE
KNOWN AS
VENOM.

I'LL ADMIT...
IT'S BEEN A LONG
TIME SINCE I
ATTENDED CHURCH
SERVICES.

BUT I DON'T
REMEMBER QUITE
SO MUCH CRANK
BEING PASSED
AROUND DURING
COMMUNION.

I MAY NOT BE THE BEST
SUPER HERO IN THE
BIZ, BUT I'M WHAT
PHILADELPHIA'S GOT.



Monday.

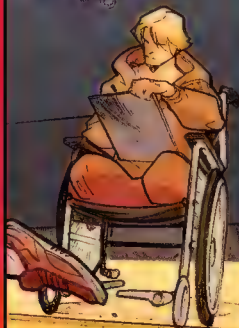
SEE... I'VE LEARNED THAT
THE WORLD IS AS **COMPLEX**
AND **CONVOLUTED**
AS YOU LET IT BE.

I'VE BROUGHT A LOT OF
GRIEF INTO MY LIFE. I'VE
COMPLICATED THINGS
WITH BAD DECISIONS...
WITH BOOZE... WITH ONE
SCREWUP AFTER ANOTHER.

THESE DAYS, THOUGH,
MY JOB'S PRETTY
STRAIGHTFORWARD.

WHEN BAD PEOPLE
CRAWL OUT OF THEIR
HOLES, I THUMP THEM
BACK DOWN.

ROUGH 'EM UP, GIVE
'EM A LITTLE SCARE,
ALERT THE PROPER
AUTHORITIES, VANISH
INTO THE SHADOWS...



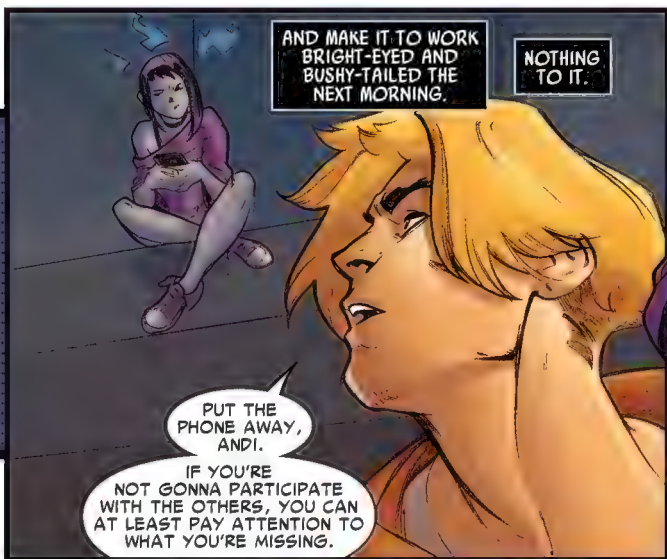
AND MAKE IT TO WORK
BRIGHT-EYED AND
BUSHY-TAILED THE
NEXT MORNING.

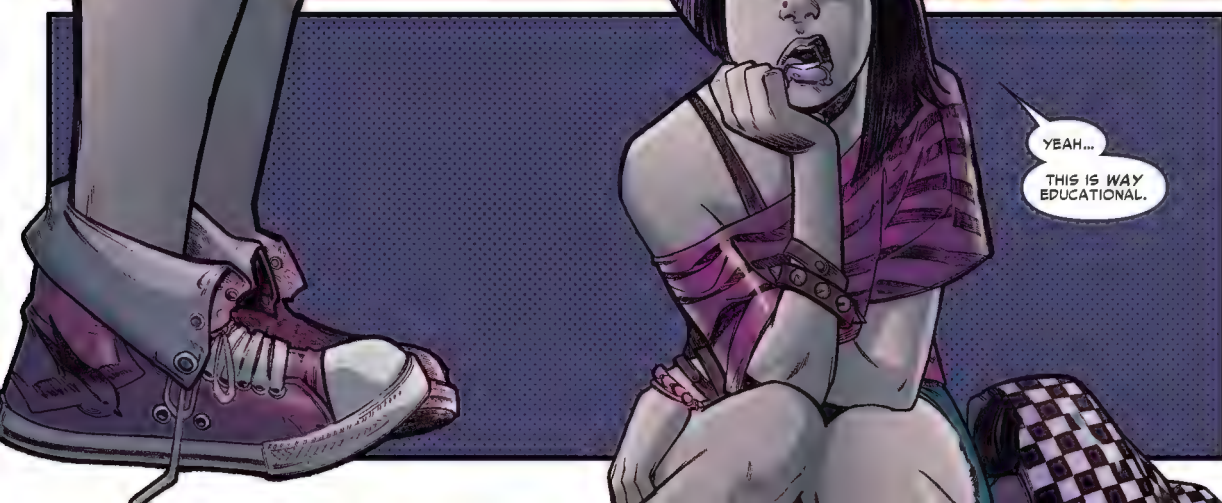
NOTHING
TO IT.

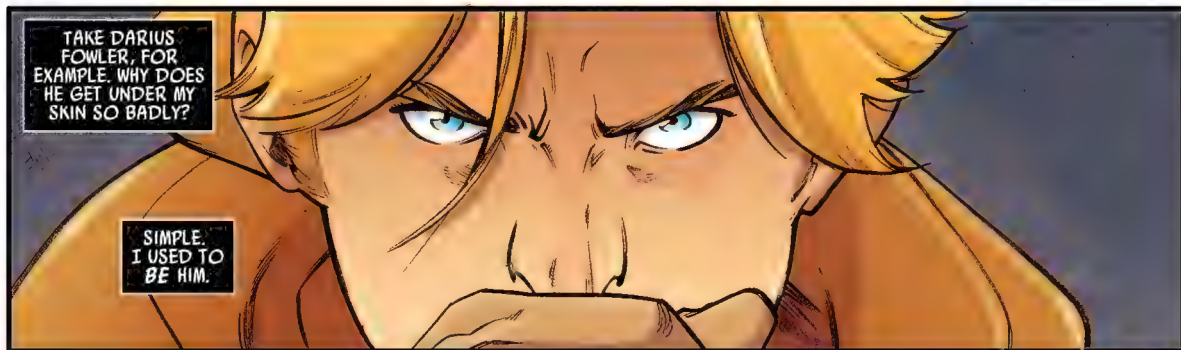
PUT THE
PHONE AWAY,
ANDI.

IF YOU'RE
NOT GONNA PARTICIPATE
WITH THE OTHERS, YOU CAN
AT LEAST PAY ATTENTION TO
WHAT YOU'RE MISSING.

WHATEVER.







TAKE DARIUS FOWLER, FOR EXAMPLE. WHY DOES HE GET UNDER MY SKIN SO BADLY?

SIMPLE. I USED TO BE HIM.



WHAT WOULD I DO IF I COULD GO BACK IN TIME AND CONFRONT MY YOUNGER SELF?

I'D SHAKE HIM TILL HIS BRAINS OOZED OUT HIS EARS.

OOF!

YEAH! GIMP NUMBER TWO DOWN!



WHAT'S WRONG, KYLE? DID I BRUISE THAT BIG, FRAGILE BRAIN OF YOURS?

YOU'RE NOT GONNA CRY, ARE YOU?

SEE? BEING THE SMARTEST KID IN SCHOOL DON'T MATTER--



--IF YOU DON'T LEARN HOW TO DUCK.

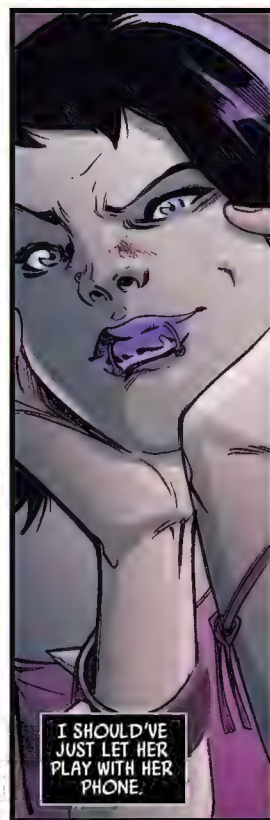


I MEAN...I'M A TEACHER.

AND SOMEBODY HAS TO TEACH THAT KID A LESSON, RIGHT?



I NEVER SAID KEEPING THINGS SIMPLE WAS GONNA BE EASY FOR ME.



THERE I GO,
OVERCOMPLICATING
THE SITUATION AGAIN.

CHANCES ARE...IT ALL
HAPPENED SO FAST...
AND I DIDN'T SEE A
THING.

BLAM! BLAM!
B-BLAM!

AND IT'S NOT LIKE SHE
SAID ANYTHING TO ME.
SHE BOLTED OUT OF
THE GYM AS SOON AS
THE BELL SOUNDED.

MY SECRET'S
SAFE...AND I NEED
TO FOCUS ON THE
TASK AT HAND.

KRRRREEEE

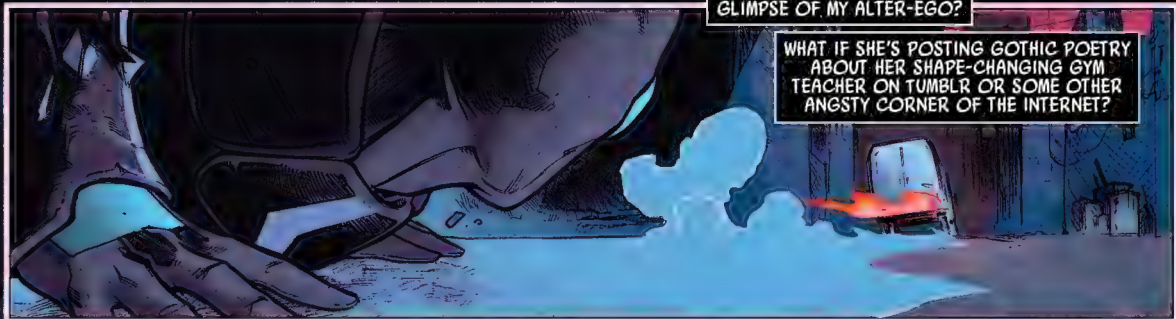
ANOTHER SHIPMENT OF DRUGS OR
WEAPONS OR... WHATEVER... FINDING ITS
WAY TO ANOTHER WOULD-BE CRIME
WARLORD WITH A COLORFUL NAME.

LORD
OGRE...
HERE I...

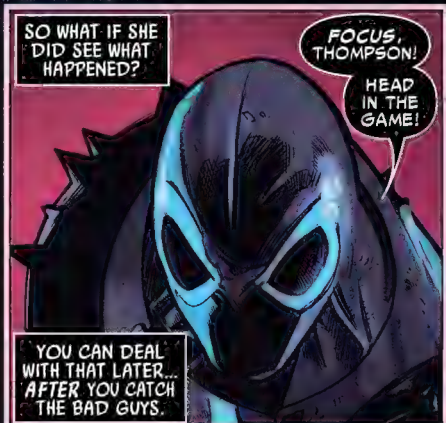
SHAKE DOWN ENOUGH
LOW-LIVES AND YOU
HEAR THE NAME MORE
THAN ONCE.



WHAT IF ANDI DID CATCH A GLIMPSE OF MY ALTER-EGO?



WHAT IF SHE'S POSTING GOTHIC POETRY ABOUT HER SHAPE-CHANGING GYM TEACHER ON TUMBLR OR SOME OTHER ANGSTY CORNER OF THE INTERNET?



SO WHAT IF SHE DID SEE WHAT HAPPENED?

FOCUS, THOMPSON!

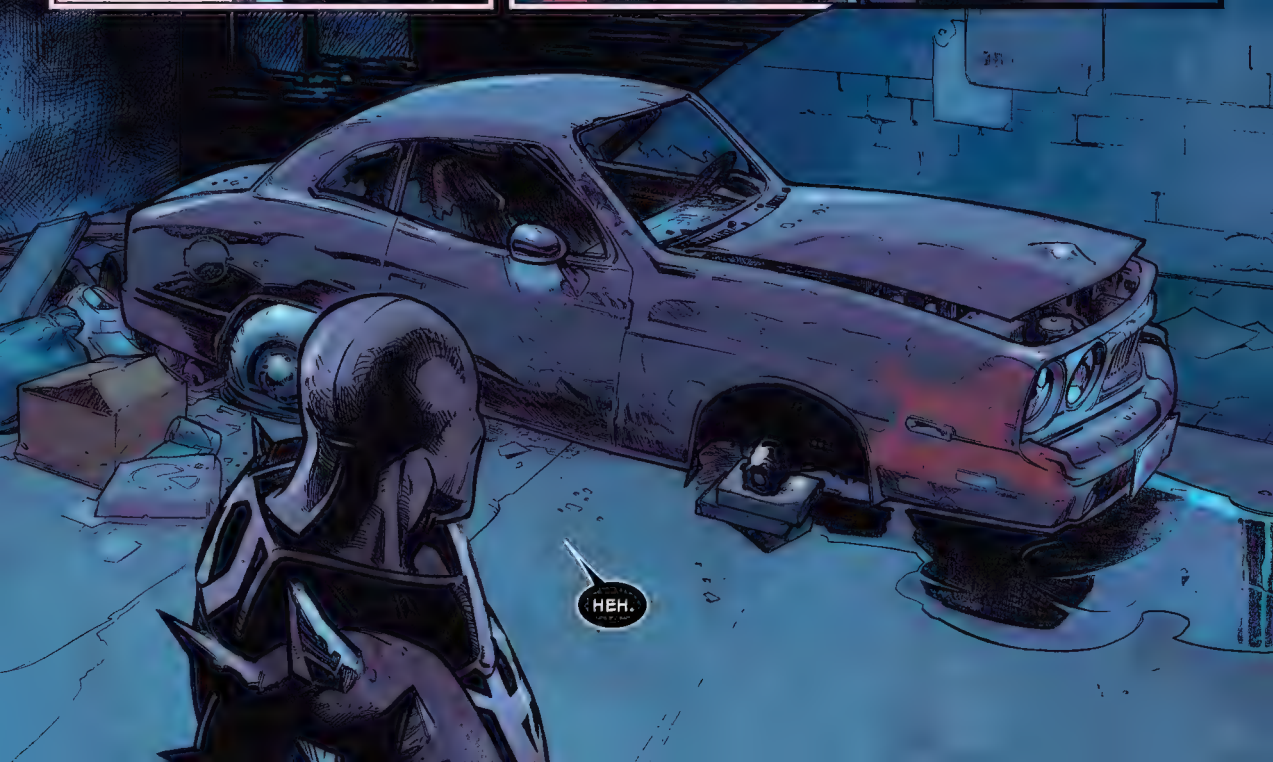
HEAD IN THE GAME!

YOU CAN DEAL WITH THAT LATER... AFTER YOU CATCH THE BAD GUYS.

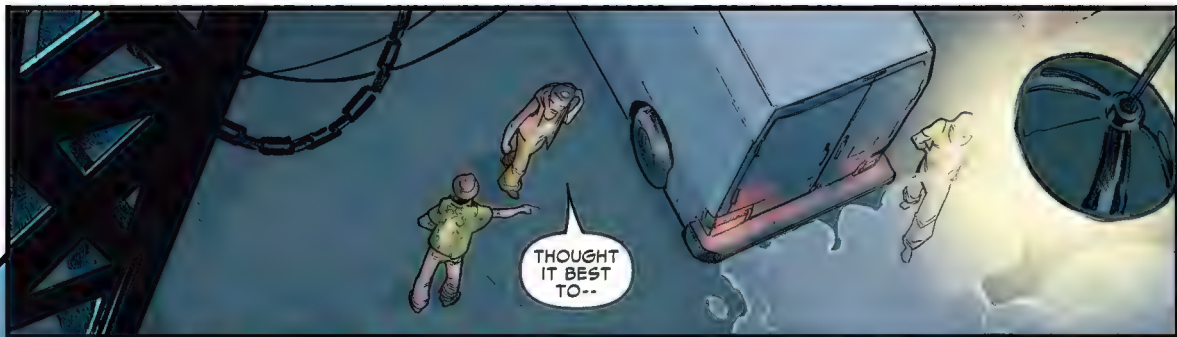
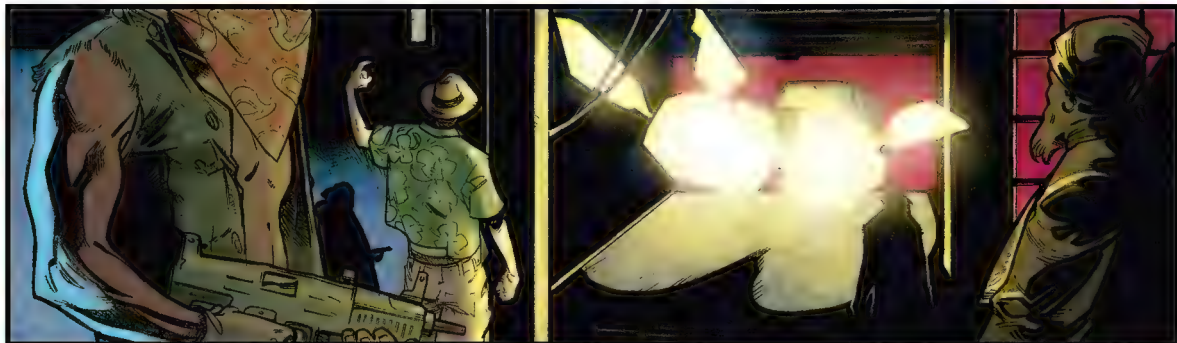
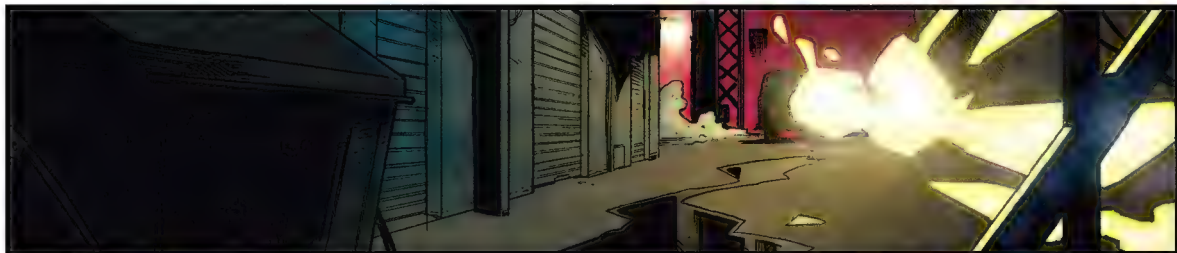


IF THEY HAVEN'T GOTTEN AWAY ALREADY.

THEY'RE NOT LETTING UP ON THE GAS. I NEED--



HEH.

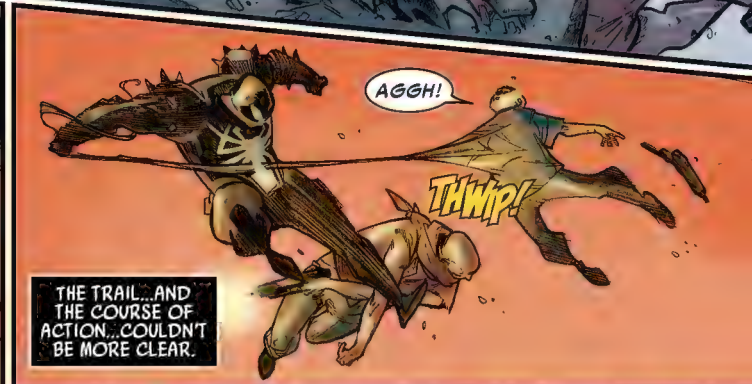
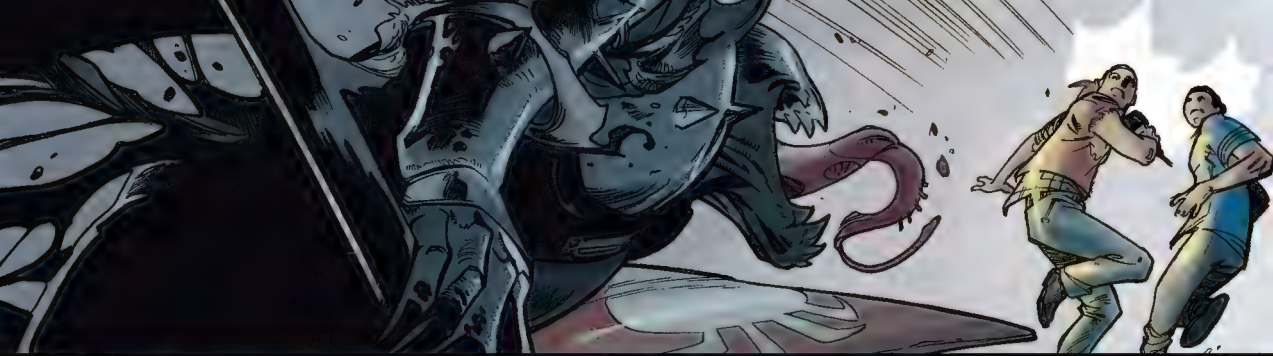


ENTER, THE
VENOM-
MOBILE!

CRASH!

RR
ROO
BOOOOOOM!!!

NEVER
UNDERESTIMATE
A
DRAMATIC
ENTRANCE.



CLEAN UP
THE STREETS.

THAT'S WHAT
HEROES DO.

BLAM!

BLAM!

JUST NEED TO PUT
THE FEAR OF GOD
INTO ONE OF
THESE PUNKS.

GET MYSELF
ONE STEP
CLOSER TO THE
BIG BOSS.

BLAM!

PTU!

YOU'LL
DO!

TELL ME
WHERE HE
IS!

WHERE'S
YOUR
BOSS?

I...
I...

I'M
RIGHT HERE,
BOGEYMAN.

YOU COME
LOOKING FOR
LORD OGRE...
AND YOU'LL
FIND HIM.

BUT THIS
IS A CAREFUL-
WHAT-YOU-WISH-
FOR SCENARIO,
SEE?

BECAUSE,
I'M ASSUMING IT'S
YOU WHO HAS BEEN
GIVING MY EMPLOYEES
A BEAT-DOWN
FROM ONE SIDE OF
PHILLY TO THE
OTHER.



YOU KNOW WHAT
THEY SAY ABOUT
MAKING AN
ASSUMPTION.

SO I'M
WRONG?



NO
YOU'RE
RIGHT.

I'VE BEEN
PEEING IN
YOUR CORN
FLAKES.

BUT
YOU'RE
STILL AN
ASS.



I'M A
BUSINESSMAN.

IF YOU
WANTED TO SEE
ME, YOU COULD'VE
CALLED AND
ARRANGED A
MEETING.

FROM
THE LOOKS OF
THINGS, I PRETTY
MUCH JUST PUT
YOU OUT OF
BUSINESS.

BUT IF
YOU WANT ME
TO PUT MORE OF
A FINE POINT ON
THE SITUATION,
I CAN HANDLE
THAT.

YOU THINK
YOU SCARE
ME WITH YOUR
TOUGH
TALK?

I AIN'T
NEVER BEEN
AFRAID OF
NOTHING.

I LOOK
INTO THE MIRROR
EVERY MORNING,
AND I SEE MY OWN
CRUELTY...MY OWN
HEARTLESSNESS...
STARING BACK
AT ME.

TELL
ME.

IF I CAN
FACE THAT
DOWN EVERY DAY,
WHAT DO I HAVE
TO FEAR FROM A
BOGEYMAN
LIKE YOU?

I GUESS
WE'LL FIND
OUT, HUH?

M-MY LORD...
I WOULDN'T
HAVE SAID
NOTHING...

...I
WOULDN'T
HAVE FLIPPED
ON YOU...
NOT EVER...

Y-YOU
KNOW THAT,
RIGHT?

OF
COURSE. YOU
HAVE ALWAYS
BEEN A GOOD
APOSTLE.



IT'S A TRAGEDY LOSING YOU LIKE THIS.



LORD OGRE'S AS BIG AND MEAN AS HIS NAME IMPLIES.

GRRRAAWW!

YEEEEEAAAARGGH!

I'VE GONE UP AGAINST BIGGER... MEANER.



FOR ALL HIS TALK ABOUT BEING UNAFRAID, I DON'T SEE HIM STEPPING UP TO FIGHT ME.

YIIIIPE!

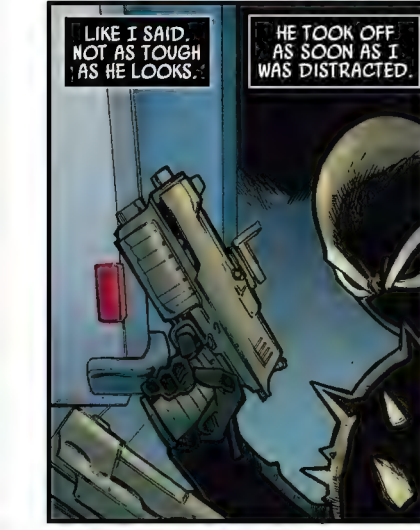


SHOW A LITTLE FORCE, HE'LL SOBER RIGHT UP.

REE-YIIPE!



WE'LL SEE
HOW LORD OGRE
AND HIS BAND
OF FREAKS LIKE
IT WHEN--



LIKE I SAID,
NOT AS TOUGH
AS HE LOOKS.

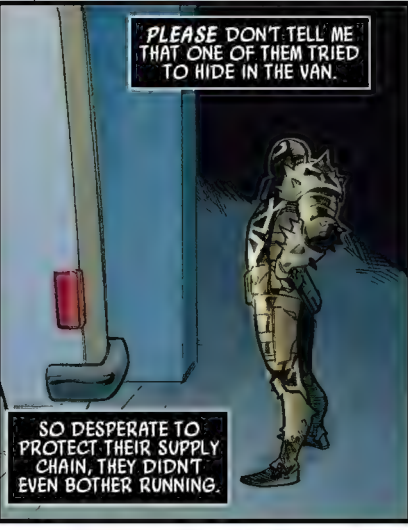
HE TOOK OFF
AS SOON AS I
WAS DISTRACTED.



COULDN'T HAVE
GOTTEN FAR,
THOUGH.

I SHOULD
BE ABLE
TO--

TH-THUMP!



PLEASE DON'T TELL ME
THAT ONE OF THEM TRIED
TO HIDE IN THE VAN.

SO DESPERATE TO
PROTECT THEIR SUPPLY
CHAIN, THEY DIDN'T
EVEN BOTHER RUNNING.

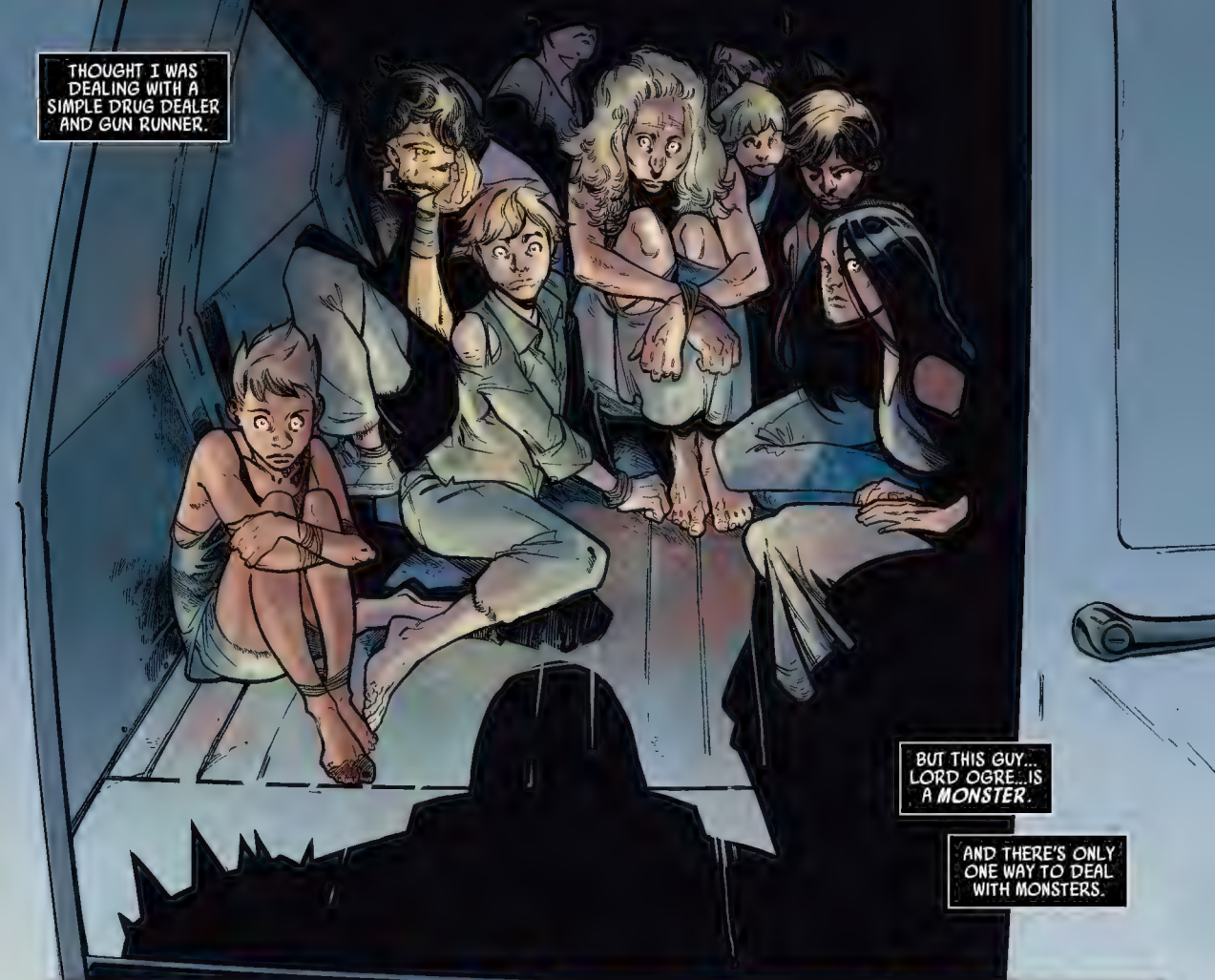


WHOEVER THAT IS,
THEY DESERVE TO
BE THE FIRST
ONE CAUGHT.



HIDE-
AND-SEEK'S
OVER--

SPRRANKK



THOUGHT I WAS
DEALING WITH A
SIMPLE DRUG DEALER
AND GUN RUNNER.

BUT THIS GUY...
LORD OGRE...IS
A MONSTER.

AND THERE'S ONLY
ONE WAY TO DEAL
WITH MONSTERS.



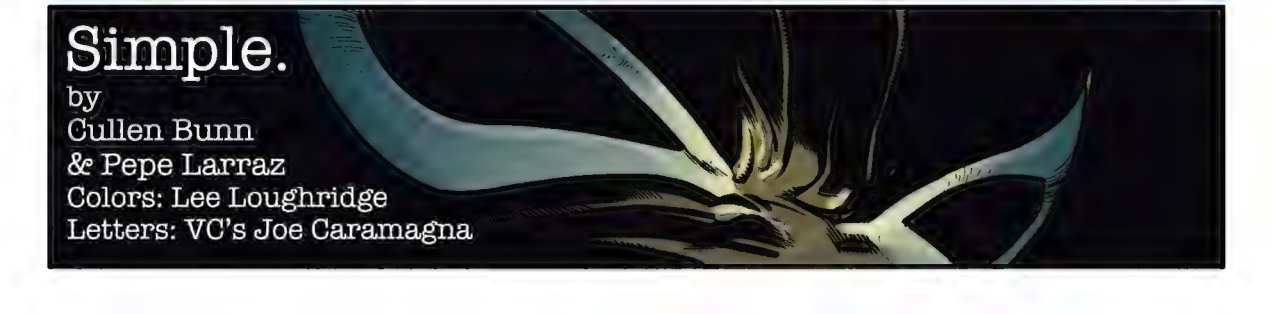
JUST LIKE
THAT...



...NOTHING'S
SIMPLE
ANYMORE.

Simple.

by
Cullen Bunn
& Pepe Larraz
Colors: Lee Loughridge
Letters: VC's Joe Caramagna



SYMBIOWROTE

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EXEC. PRODUCER

Send e-mail to SPIDEYOFFICE@MARVEL.COM
(please mark as OKAY TO PRINT)

Venomites! It's time for another game of Editorial Musical Chairs! Huzzah! (I'm just going to ignore all that groaning with forced enthusiasm!)

Since I was PROMOTED (dusting shoulder off) a few months ago to full editor, I've been moving around my workload a bit. Luckily for you, Venom is my latest addition and I'm really excited to be onboard. And that's saying a lot for someone who has always found black, slimy substances from outer space to be slightly off-putting.

What I love about Flash Thompson as Venom is that Flash was the guy I hated growing up--both as the character and who he represented in real life. I'm not saying I love bullies, I love the idea that bullies like Flash can change. And in Flash's case, he became the very opposite of who he'd been perceived to be for much of his life. It's no coincidence then that the very thing that made him a super hero has its own share of demons. Flash's constant struggle is to keep these demons at bay, to continuously strive to be the better person, the better hero, to not fall into the patterns of his past life. And that struggle is what makes him such an empathetic character—because we're all doing the same things, just in different ways.

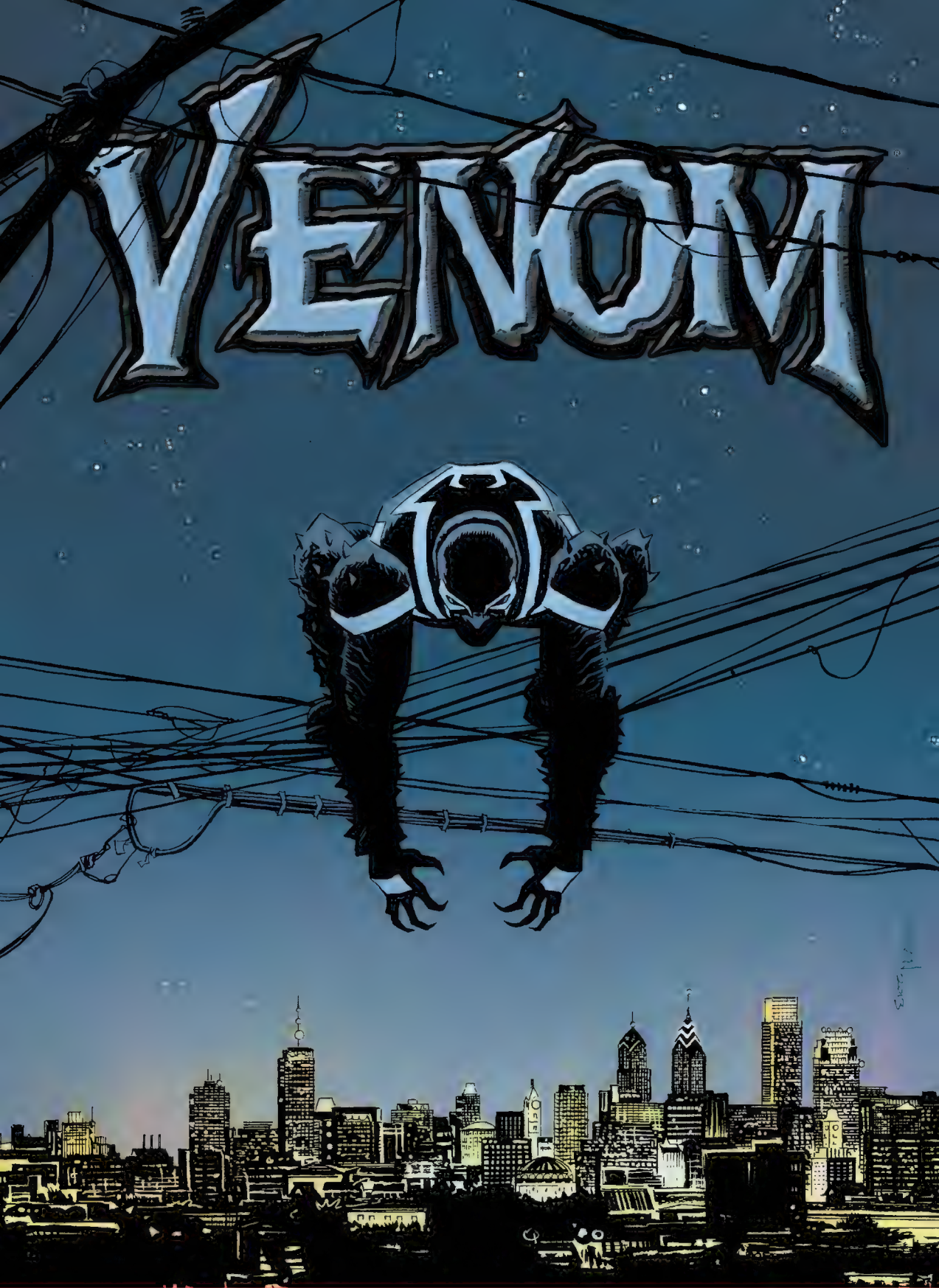
The villain becomes the hero—how very inspiring, how very hopeful. It makes you think that maybe evil can be eradicated, maybe good can overcome the bad, maybe we are all capable of doing so much more than we believe we can. Personally though, I'm pretty sure we knew that all along.

Till next time, I'll be here sitting patiently waiting for your thoughts. As always send your letters, your pictures, your hopes, dreams and fears! Okay, maybe not the last three.

XOXO
Sana MiniB Amanat

NEXT:





MARVEL

**BUNN
JACINTO
LOUGHRIDGE**

037

Eugene "Flash" Thompson was a high-school-bully-turned-war-hero, inspired by the Amazing Spider-Man to get his act together. When he lost both legs in combat, his country gave him a chance to serve again, bonding him with the alien parasite suit that grants its host powers similar to Spider-Man. From that day on, he was the Secret Avenger known as...

VENOM



PREVIOUSLY...

FLASH THOMPSON IS PHILADELPHIA'S NEWEST VIGILANTE, AND HE WANTS TO KEEP THINGS SIMPLE.



A STEADY JOB BY DAY...



AND A HOBBY THAT KEEPS HIM BUSY AT NIGHT...

UNFORTUNATELY FOR FLASH...



HIS HOBBY JUST GOT COMPLICATED...

CULLEN BUNN
writer

KIM JACINTO
artist

LEE LOUGHRIDGE
color art

VC's JOE CARAMAGNA
letters

**DECLAN SHALVEY &
JORDIE BELLAIRE**
cover art

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editor

STEPHEN WACKER
senior editor

AXEL ALONSO
editor in chief

JOE QUESADA
chief creative officer

DAN BUCKLEY
publisher

ALAN FINE
exec. producer

West Philadelphia High School.

SO...
VENOM.

UH...
HOW
DID--
WHAT--

WELL...

THAT'LL WAKE
YOU UP FASTER
THAN A STRONG
CUP OF COFFEE.

YOU'RE
FLASH
THOMPSON,
RIGHT? THE
ASSISTANT
COACH?

I
UNDERSTAND
YOU WERE PRESENT
DURING THE RECENT...
UNPLEASANTNESS AT
THE SCHOOL.

YOU SAW
VENOM...UP
CLOSE AND
PERSONAL.

KATY KIERNAN...
HERE...ASKING
ABOUT MY
ALTER EGO.

PLAY IT.
COOL.

BETTER
YET...PLAY IT
STUPID.

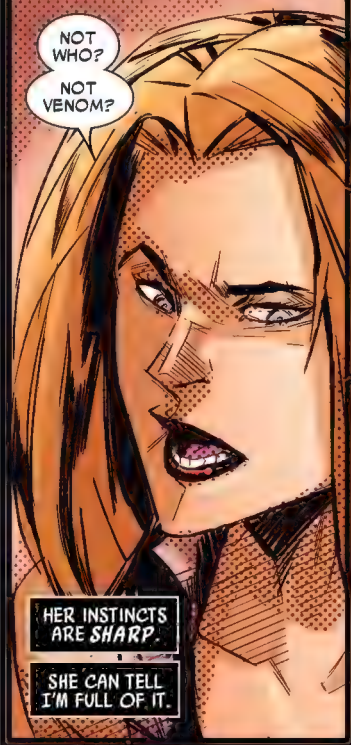
I'M
SORRY.

WHO
ARE YOU
AGAIN?

KATY
KIERNAN.
THE DAILY
INQUISITOR.

YOU WERE
HERE WHEN
VENOM SAVED
THE SCHOOL,
RIGHT?

THAT...
THAT'S
NOT--



NOT WHO?
NOT VENOM?

HER INSTINCTS ARE **SHARP**.

SHE CAN TELL I'M FULL OF IT.



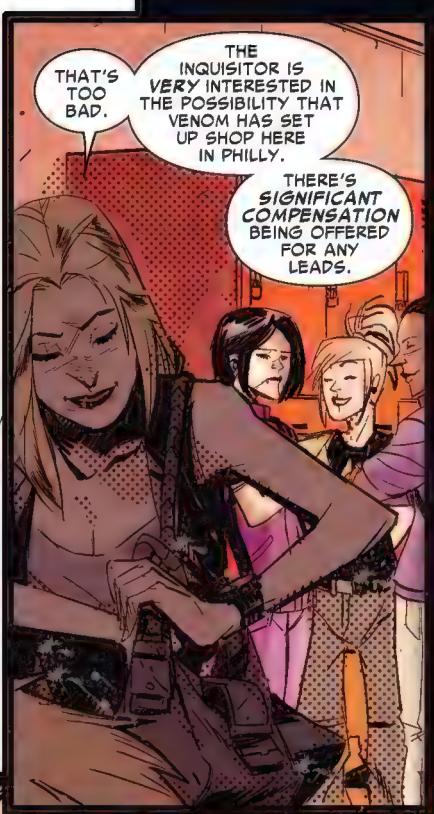
IT'S NOT SOMETHING I KNOW MUCH ABOUT, REALLY.

IT'S NOT LIKE I SAW ANYTHING.

EVERYTHING HAPPENED SO FAST.

DISENGAGE, THOMPSON.

DON'T DIG YOURSELF A HOLE.



THAT'S TOO BAD.

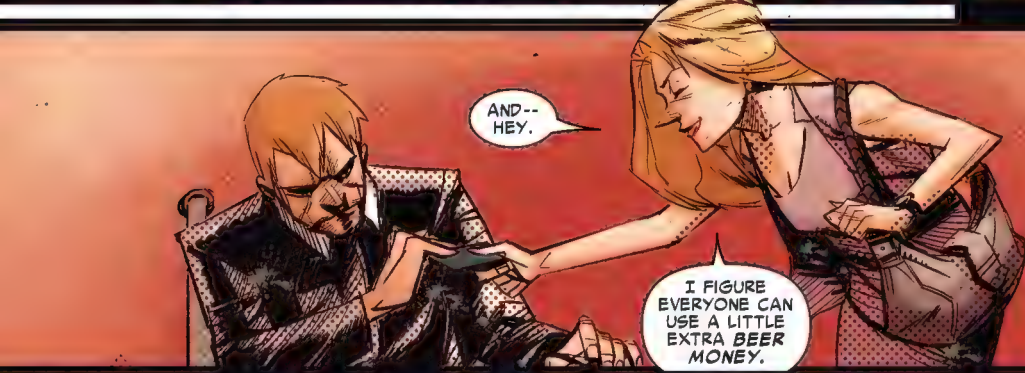
THE INQUISITOR IS VERY INTERESTED IN THE POSSIBILITY THAT VENOM HAS SET UP SHOP HERE IN PHILLY.

THERE'S SIGNIFICANT COMPENSATION BEING OFFERED FOR ANY LEADS.



IF YOU DON'T HAVE ANY INFORMATION THAT CAN HELP...

...I'M SURE SOMEONE DOES.



AND-- HEY.

I FIGURE EVERYONE CAN USE A LITTLE EXTRA BEER MONEY.



I DON'T DRINK.



WELL,
I DO.

MAYBE
YOU CAN BUY
ME A DRINK
SOMETIME.

THE
COMPANIONSHIP
MIGHT JOG YOUR
MEMORY.



AND HERE I THOUGHT
I WAS DONE WITH
THE **THIRD DEGREE**.

NO TELLING WHAT
ANDI MIGHT ASK
IF I DON'T SHUT
HER DOWN...

...ESPECIALLY
CONSIDERING THAT SHE
MIGHT HAVE SPOTTED
ME USING THE SYMBIOTE
A FEW DAYS AGO.

WHO WAS
THAT?

YOUR
GIRLFRIEND?

ANDI...



YOU WERE
EAVESDROPPING.
YOU KNOW PERFECTLY
WELL SHE'S NOT MY
GIRLFRIEND.

I DUNNO.

JUST
SEEMED LIKE
YOU KNEW EACH
OTHER, IS ALL, BUT
NEITHER ONE OF
YOU WANTED TO
ADMIT IT.

LIKE
SOME SORT
OF CREEPY
ROLEPLAY
KIND OF
THING.



SORRY TO
DISAPPOINT.

I...

I DON'T
KNOW HER
AT ALL.



Vintage Coin-Op
Warehouse.

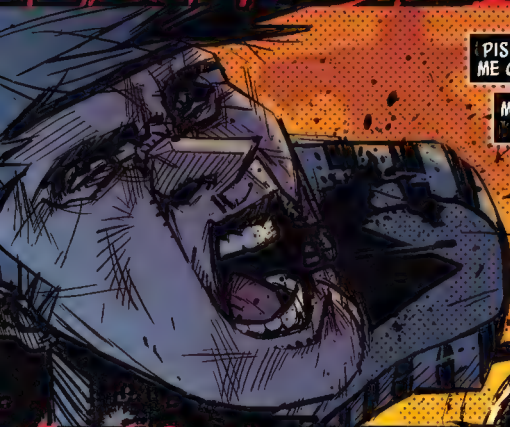
KATY
##%&##%
KIERNAN!

HAVEN'T HEARD FROM HER
IN WEEKS...AND ALL OF A
SUDDEN SHE SHOWS UP AT
MY DAY JOB...ASKING ME
ABOUT VENOM!

THAT WASN'T PART
OF THE DEAL! WE
WERE SUPPOSED TO
HELP EACH OTHER!

BUT NOW IT LOOKS
LIKE SHE'S TARGETING
ME FOR HER NEXT
BIG EXPOSE!

SMASH!



PISSES
ME OFF.

MORE THAN
A LITTLE.



AND THESE GUYS
PAY THE PRICE
FOR THAT.



HRRRGGG

URBAN
FIGHT

NOT LIKE
THEY DON'T
DESERVE
IT.

KIDNAPPING
PEOPLE FROM
GOD-KNOWS-
WHERE.

FORCING
THEM TO WORK
THEIR LABS.

OR
WORSE.

GO!
GET OUT OF
HERE!

NOW!

THIS WAREHOUSE IS
MORE THAN JUST A
FRONT FOR ANOTHER
DRUG LAB.

IT'S A NEST OF
SUFFERING.

ALL IN THE
NAME OF--

LORD
OGRE.

WHERE
DO I FIND
HIM?

Y-YOU...
DON'T...

WON'T EVER
FIND HIM...BUT
HE...HE'S FOUND...
HE KNOWS
WHERE...YOU...

NNNNNN

DAMN.

PASSED
OUT.

GUESS I
SQUEEZED
TOO HARD.

GOOD NEWS IS...
DUMBASS THUGS
ARE NEVER IN
SHORT SUPPLY.

BLAM BLAM

BLAM BLAM

BEEN TRACKING THIS
THUG...LORD OGRE...
FROM ONE ILLICIT
OP TO THE NEXT.

ALWAYS A STEP
BEHIND HIM...AND
HE COVERS ANY
TRACKS THAT LEAD
DIRECTLY TO HIM.

I'M CLOSE,
THOUGH. I
CAN FEEL IT.

OGRE'S GOT HIS
FINGERS IN EVERY
RACKET YOU
CAN IMAGINE.

HE'S A
BIG FISH.

AND WHEN I
FIND HIM, HE'S
GONNA WISH--

WHULUFI!

SHHHHHH-WAKKOW

WHAP!

WHAT THE
HELL? A
SHIELD?

CAPTAIN
AMERICA?

NO.
NOT CAP.

NICE
SHOT, DEATH-
SHIELD.

...PUNK-ASS
AIN'T GONNA
KNOW WHAT
HITS HIM...

TAKE
YOUR SHOT,
JAGGED
BOW.

FINISH HIM
OFF AND LET'S
CASH OUR
CHECKS!

HASNT
ANYONE
EVER TOLD
YOU...

...PRETENDING
TO BE SUPER
HEROES IS
DANGEROUS
BUSINESS?

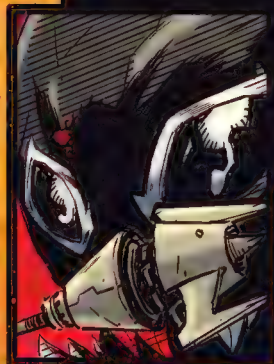


FUNNY.
WAS
GONNA ASK
YOU THE
SAME
THING.

GUY'S GOT
SKILL.

ALMOST
AS GOOD AS
HAWKEYE.

JUST AS
TRICKY,
TOO!



AAARGH!



DKK!

YEEENAAAAARGGH!



SONIC
ARROWS.

WHOEVER THESE
GUYS ARE...THEY
CAME PREPARED.

SNAP



PREPARED
TO HUNT ME.

MY
TURN!

UNNF!

WOW
WOW
WOW



HITS LIKE A
LOCOMOTIVE.

JUST AS
STRONG AS
SPIDEY.

DIDN'T
YOU GET THE
MEMO?

THERE'S
ONLY ONE
KNOCK-OFF
WALL-CRAWLER
ALLOWED
IN PHILLY.

THWIP!

THWIP!

NAME'S
BLOOD-
SPIDER!

I'M NOT
TRYING TO BE
SPIDER-MAN!



YOU
GOT THAT
RIGHT!

I'VE FOUGHT
SPIDER-MAN.

AND
YOU AREN'T
HIM!

RULUUGH!

SHRRPP!
SHRRPP!

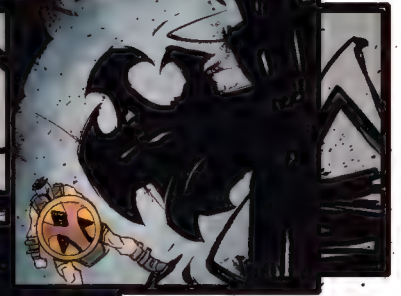
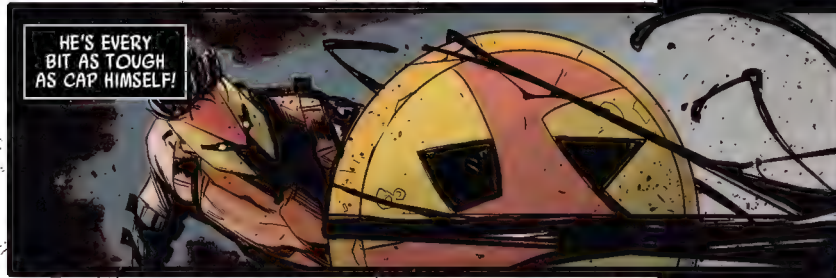


TOUGH
LUCK FOR
YOU.

NEITHER
AM I.

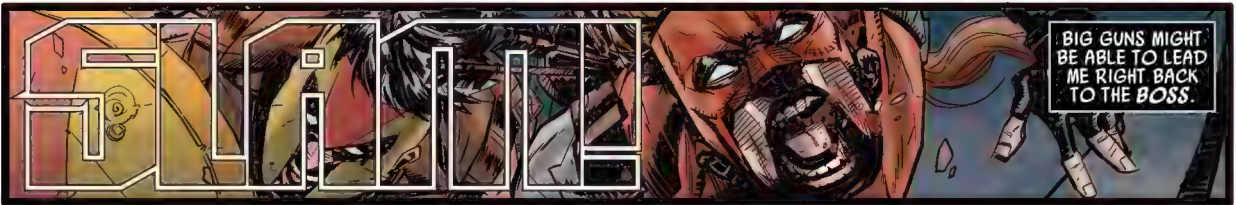


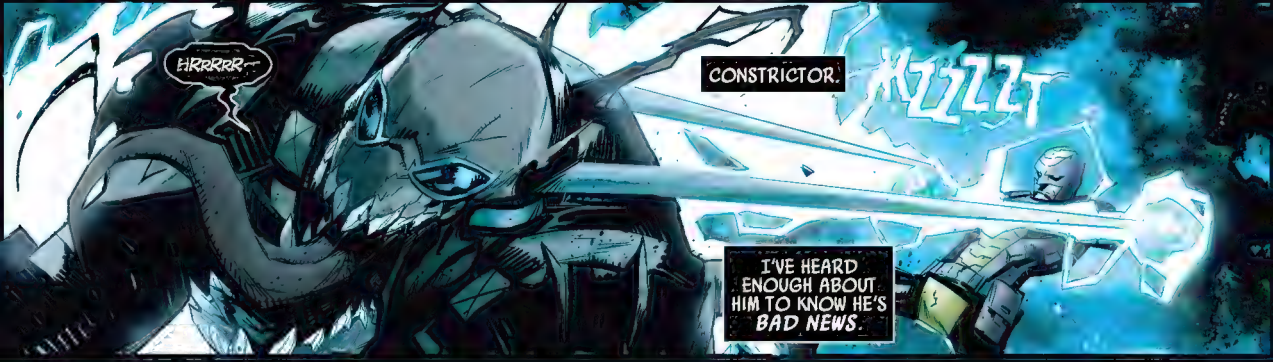
WHERE THE HELL DO
THEY GROW THESE GUYS?



THESE THREE...
TOGETHER...
ALMOST
OUTCLASS
ME.

OGRE'S
PULLING OUT THE
BIG GUNS.



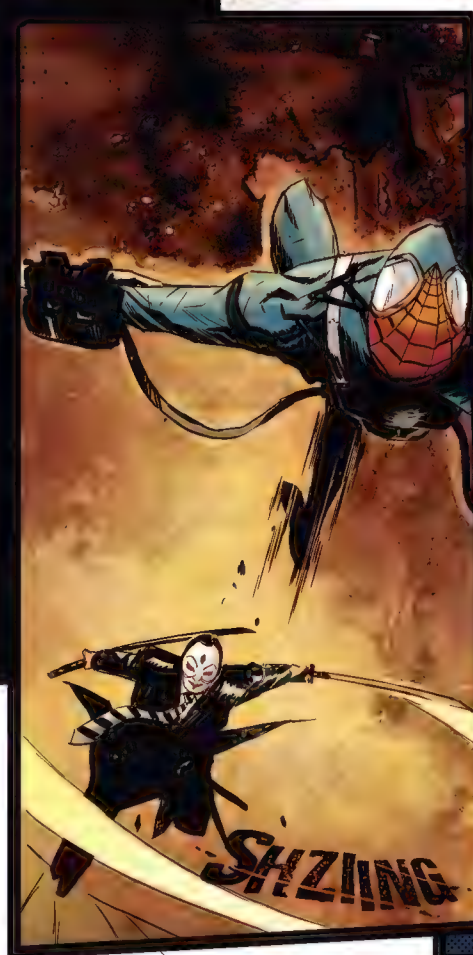






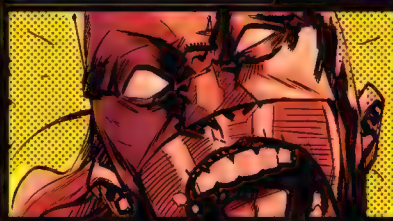
KI-BOOM!
BOOM!

AW,
HELL
NO!



REALLY?

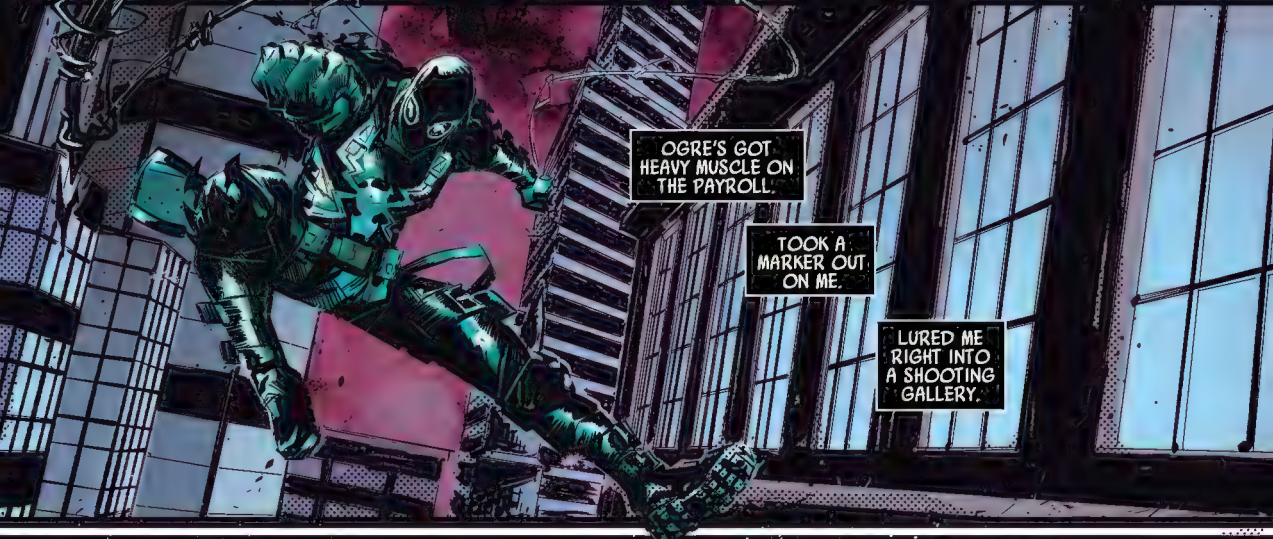
YOU
JERKS ARE
JUST BEING
SORE
LOSERS!
FACE IT--
THE BETTER
MERC
WON!



IF I HAVE
TO KICK YOUR
BUTTS TO
PROVE IT...
FINE
BY ME.



HEY...
WAIT A
SECOND.
DID
ANYBODY
SEE
WHERE
VENOM
WENT?



OGRE'S GOT
HEAVY MUSCLE ON
THE PAYROLL.

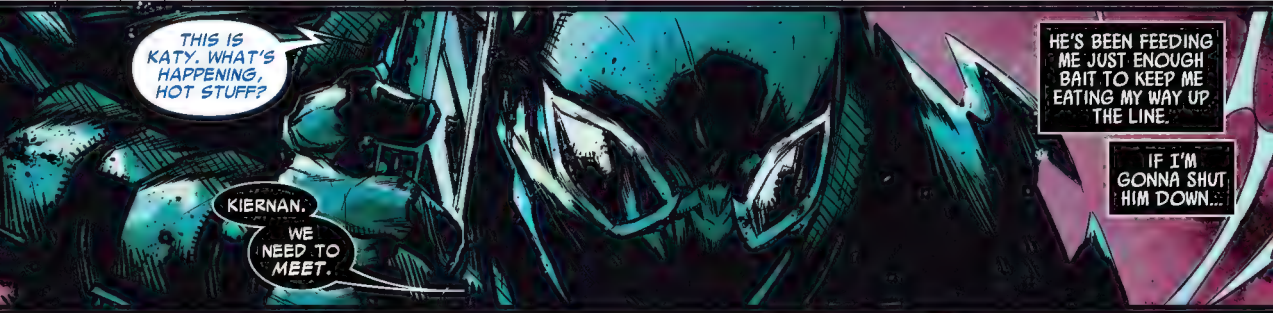
TOOK A
MARKER OUT
ON ME.

LURED ME
RIGHT INTO
A SHOOTING
GALLERY.



WASTING
MY TIME.

OGRE KNOWS
I'M COMING
FOR HIM.



THIS IS
KATY. WHAT'S
HAPPENING,
HOT STUFF?

KIERNAN.
WE
NEED TO
MEET.

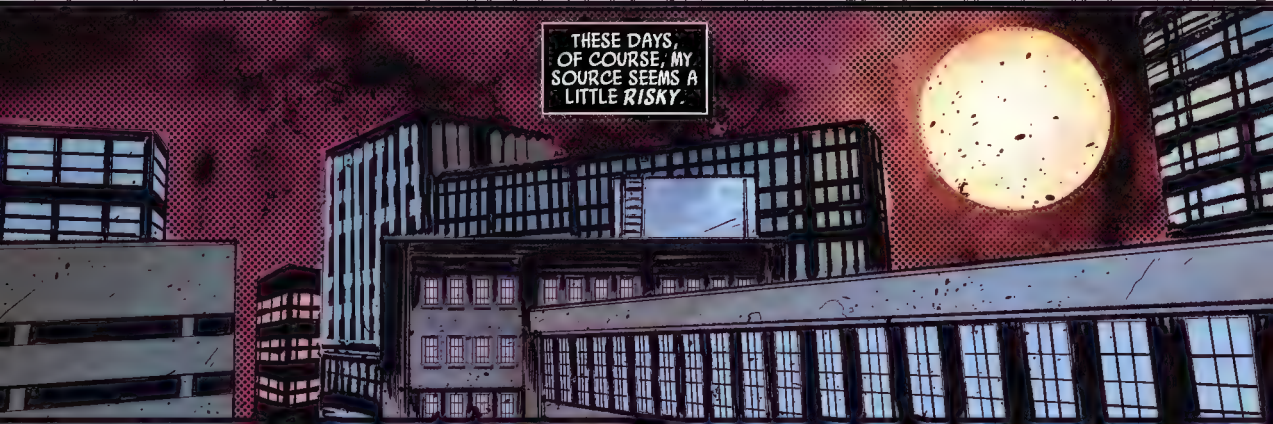
HE'S BEEN FEEDING
ME JUST ENOUGH
BAIT TO KEEP ME
EATING MY WAY UP
THE LINE.

IF I'M
GONNA SHUT
HIM DOWN...

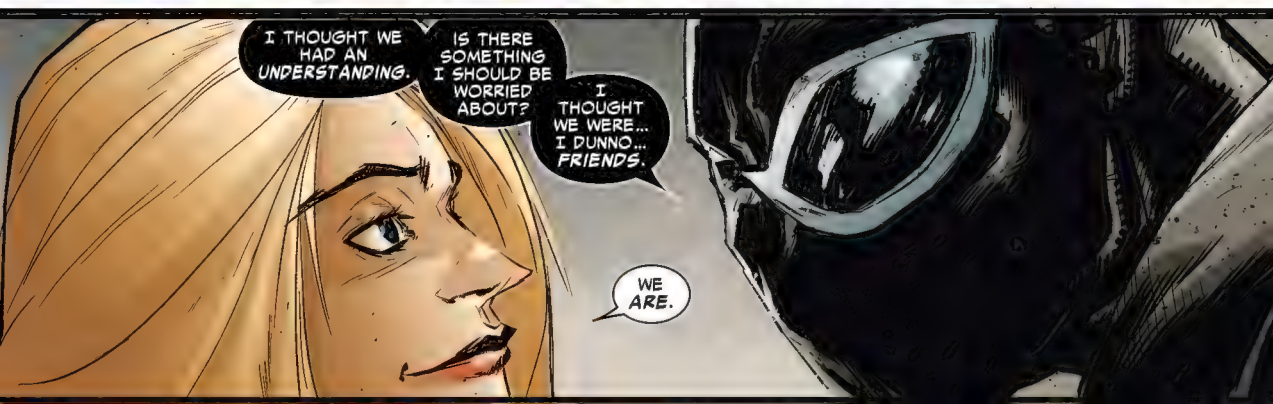


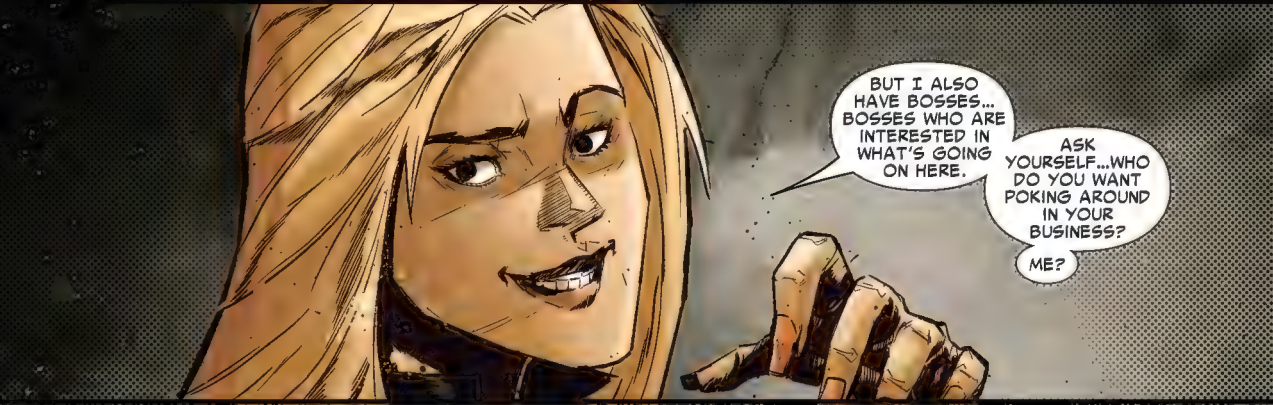
...IF I'M
GONNA
SURVIVE...

I'M GONNA
NEED BETTER
INTEL.



THESE DAYS,
OF COURSE, MY
SOURCE SEEMS A
LITTLE RISKY.





BUT I ALSO
HAVE BOSSES...
BOSSES WHO ARE
INTERESTED IN
WHAT'S GOING
ON HERE.

ASK
YOURSELF...WHO
DO YOU WANT
POKING AROUND
IN YOUR
BUSINESS?

ME?



OR MAYBE
SOME OTHER
REPORTER WHO
DOESN'T HAVE
ANY LOYALTY
TO YOU?

SO
YOU'RE
LOYAL TO
ME?



IF
I WANTED
TO KNOW YOUR
SECRET IDENTITY
OR WHATEVER...
I'D KNOW
ALREADY.

AT LEAST
WITH ME
HERE...I CAN
GUIDE THE
PUBLICITY.



Y'KNOW...
WHAT YOU'RE
DOING...IT'S
AN OLD
TRICK.

USED TO
BE PRETTY
GOOD AT IT.
MYSELF.

IF YOU'RE
SMART ENOUGH,
YOU CAN CONVINCE
SOMEONE THAT
YOU'RE BULLYING
THEM FOR THEIR
OWN GOOD.

YOU
THINK I'M
BULLYING
YOU?



DOESN'T
MATTER.

BECAUSE...
RIGHT NOW...
I NEED
YOU.



OF
COURSE
YOU DO.



I'M
SERIOUS,
KATY.

THIS GUY
I'M AFTER--
I DON'T KNOW
ANYTHING
ABOUT HIM.

AND IF
I STAND A
CHANCE OF
STOPPING HIM
BEFORE HE
KILLS ME, I
NEED--



RESOURCES.



YOU KNOW...
INFORMANTS...SPIES...
FRIENDLIES.

WEAPONS
SUPPLIERS...
SAFE HOUSES...
MAYBE EVEN A
HEADQUARTERS.

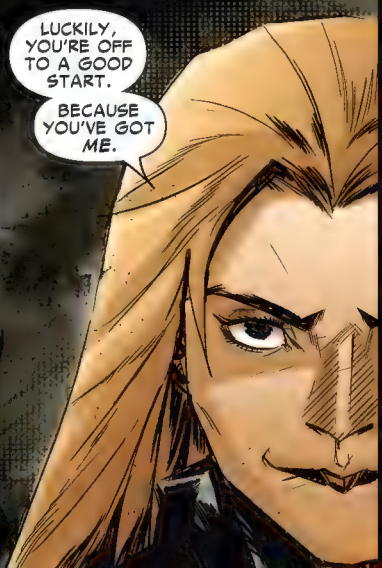
IF YOU
PLAN ON BEING
PHILADELPHIA'S
DARK AVENGER,
YOU NEED
ASSETS.



SOUNDS
GREAT.

EXCEPT
THERE'S ALREADY
A CONTRACT ON
MY HEAD.

WHATEVER
I'M GONNA DO,
IT'S GOTTA
BE FAST.



LUCKILY,
YOU'RE OFF
TO A GOOD
START.

BECAUSE
YOU'VE GOT
ME.



I WANT
TO THANK
YOU ALL FOR
COMING.

Lord Ogre's Penthouse.



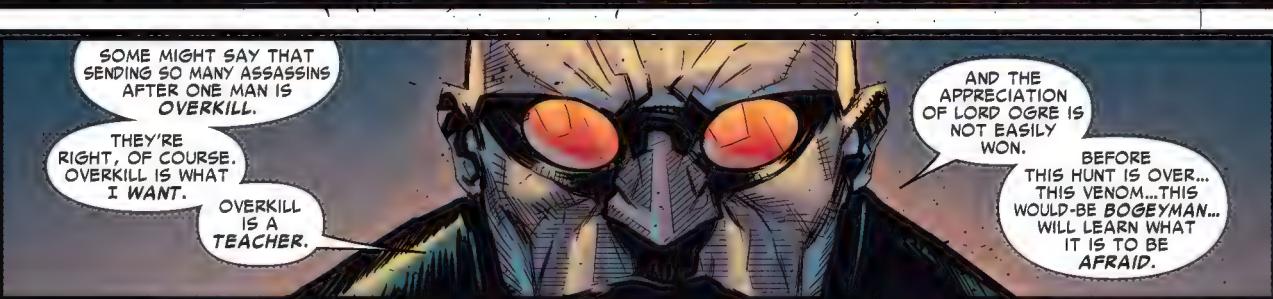
WHETHER
YOU ARE HERE
FOR THE MONEY...
FOR THE HONOR...
OR FOR THE
THRILL OF THE
HUNT...

...NO
MATTER
YOUR MOTIVES,
CREED, OR
CULT...

...YOU
HAVE MY
GRATITUDE.

LOOK
AROUND YOU...
BECAUSE ONE OF
YOU...OR ONE OF THE
OTHERS WHO ARRIVED
EARLIER TODAY...WILL
PROVE YOURSELF
IN MY EYES...

...AND KILL
AGENT VENOM
LIKE THE DOG
HE IS.



SOME MIGHT SAY THAT
SENDING SO MANY ASSASSINS
AFTER ONE MAN IS
OVERKILL.

THEY'RE
RIGHT, OF COURSE.
OVERKILL IS WHAT
I WANT.

OVERKILL
IS A
TEACHER.

AND THE
APPRECIATION
OF LORD OGRE IS
NOT EASILY
WON.

BEFORE
THIS HUNT IS OVER...
THIS VENOM...THIS
WOULD-BE BOGEYMAN...
WILL LEARN WHAT
IT IS TO BE
AFRAID.



FEAR AND
MURDER-IN-
EXCESS?

SOUNDS
LIKE YER
SINGING MY
TUNE.

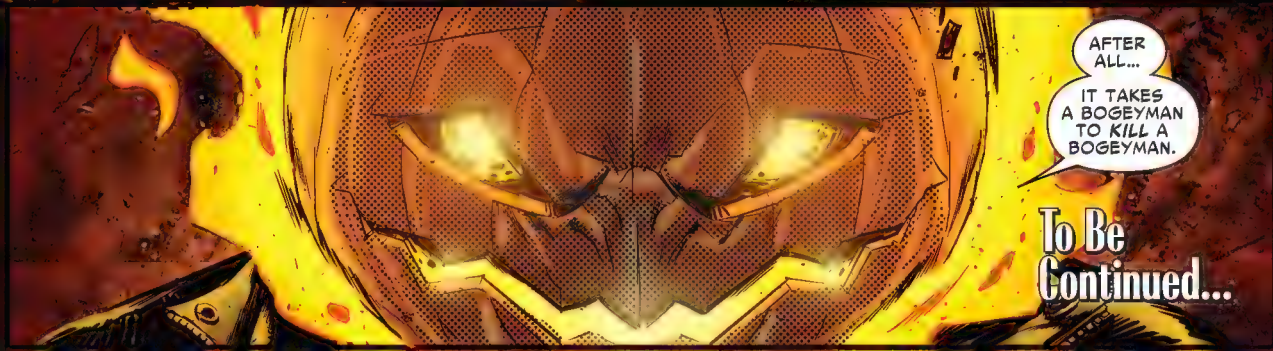


SORRY
I'M A LITTLE
LATE TO THE
PARTY.

HAD A
LITTLE TROUBLE
SNAGGING A
HALL-PASS.

BUT
OL' JACK
O'LANTERN'S
THROWING HIS
PUMPKIN INTO
THE RING.

AND I
THINK I'VE
GOT A BIT OF
AN EDGE OVER
THESE OTHER
YAHOOOS.



AFTER
ALL...

IT TAKES
A BOGEYMAN
TO KILL A
BOGEYMAN.

To Be
Continued...

SYMBIOWROTE

SANA AMANAT
EDITOR

AXEL ALONSO
EDITOR IN CHIEF

DAN BUCKLEY
PUBLISHER

STEPHEN WACKER
SENIOR EDITOR

JOE QUESADA
CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER

ALAN FINE
EXEC. PRODUCER

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NEXT!



SUPERIOR SPIDER-MAN #12



SCARLET SPIDER #18



MORBIUS #6

VENOM



Spot
McFarlane

MARVEL

**SHARE YOUR
UNIVERSE**

**BUNN
JACINTO
LOUGHRIDGE**

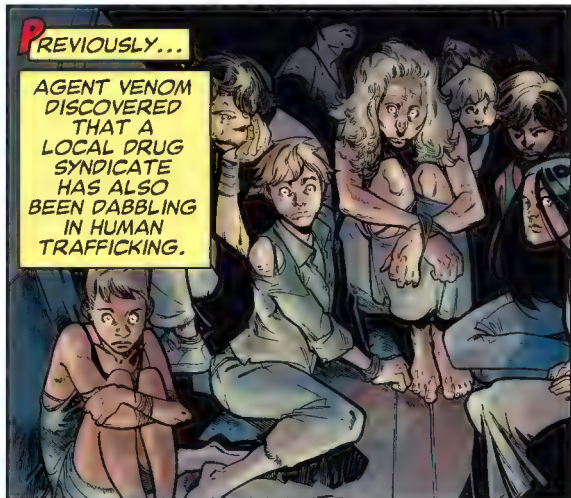
038

Eugene "Flash" Thompson was a high-school-bully-turned-war-hero, inspired by the Amazing Spider-Man to get his act together. When he lost both legs in combat, his country gave him a chance to serve again, bonding him with the alien parasite suit that grants its host powers similar to Spider-Man. From that day on, he was the Secret Avenger known as...

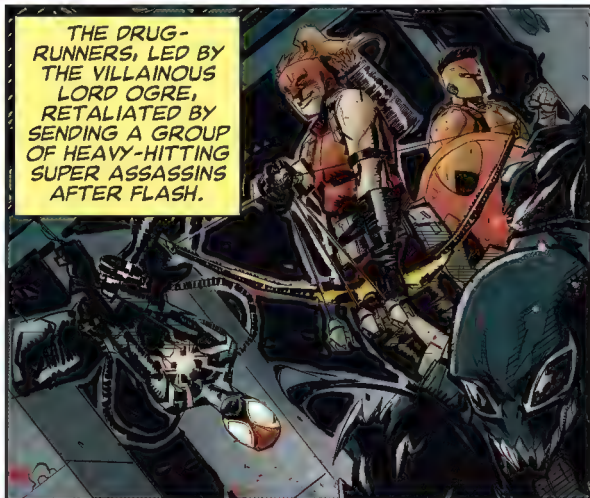
VENOM

PREVIOUSLY...

AGENT VENOM DISCOVERED THAT A LOCAL DRUG SYNDICATE HAS ALSO BEEN DABBLING IN HUMAN TRAFFICKING.

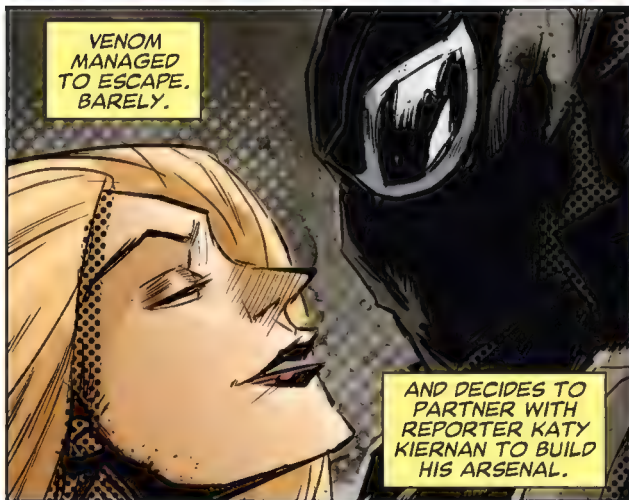


THE DRUG-RUNNERS, LED BY THE VILLAINOUS LORD OGRE, RETALIATED BY SENDING A GROUP OF HEAVY-HITTING SUPER ASSASSINS AFTER FLASH.



VENOM MANAGED TO ESCAPE BARELY.

AND DECIDES TO PARTNER WITH REPORTER KATY KIERNAN TO BUILD HIS ARSENAL.



MEANWHILE, LORD OGRE PLAYED HIS ACE IN THE HOLE: FLASH'S OLD FOE, THE MADMAN KNOWN AS JACK O'LANTERN!



CULLEN BUNN

writer

KIM JACINTO

artist

LEE LOUGHRIDGE

color art

VC's JOE CARAMAGNA
letters

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editor in chief

JOE QUESADA
chief creative officer

DAN BUCKLEY
publisher

ALAN FINE
exec. producer

Philadelphia.

MORNIN' SUNSHINE.

SURE THING.

AND WHAT'S SO GOOD ABOUT IT?

DIDN'T SAY IT WAS GOOD. JUST SAID MORNIN'.

WHICH IS WHAT IT IS.

WHAT'S FOR BREAKFAST, ANDREA?

WELL...WHILE THIS MAY LOOK LIKE A COLORFUL BOX OF SUGARY CEREAL, IT'S REALLY A COLORFUL BOX FULL OF EGGS BENEDICT, BELGIAN WAFFLES, AND FRESH FRUIT.

CEREAL SUITS ME JUST FINE. BREAKFAST OF CHAMPEENS.

AND THERE'S ALWAYS A TOY SURPRISE.

WHATEVER. NOBODY DOES TOYS ANYMORE, DAD, AND YOU KNOW IT.

YOU MIGHT GET AN ONLINE CODE OR SOMETHING.



SOMETHING
ON YOUR MIND,
KIDDO?



YOU EVER
KNOW A
SECRET ABOUT
SOMEONE?

I MEAN
A REALLY
IMPORTANT
SECRET?



I THINK
I KNOW
SOMETHING
ABOUT
SOMEONE.

...SOMEONE
AT SCHOOL...

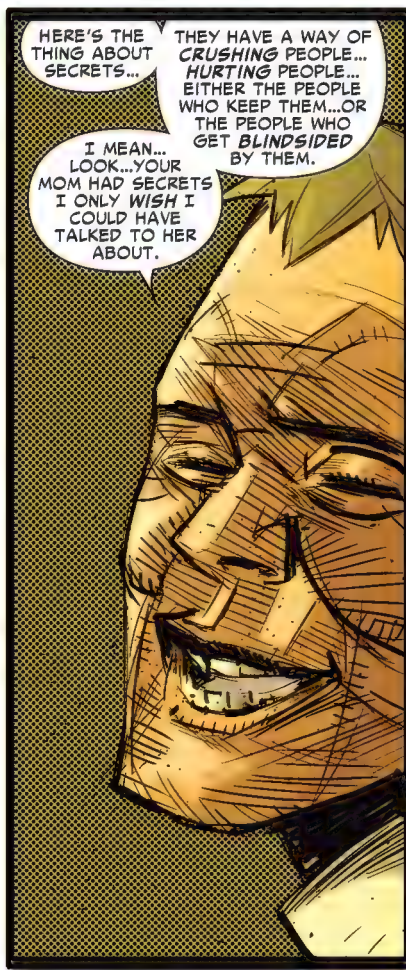
...AND THEY
DON'T REALIZE
I'VE FIGURED
IT OUT...

...BUT IT'S
THE KIND OF
THING THAT...I
DUNNO...IF IT WAS
ME...I'D WANT
TO TALK TO
SOMEBODY
ABOUT.



MAYBE IT'S
STUPID...

...BUT I
THOUGHT
I MIGHT BE
ABLE TO
HELP.



HERE'S THE
THING ABOUT
SECRETS...

THEY HAVE A WAY OF
CRUSHING PEOPLE...
HURTING PEOPLE...
EITHER THE PEOPLE
WHO KEEP THEM...OR
THE PEOPLE WHO
GET **BLINDSIDED**
BY THEM.

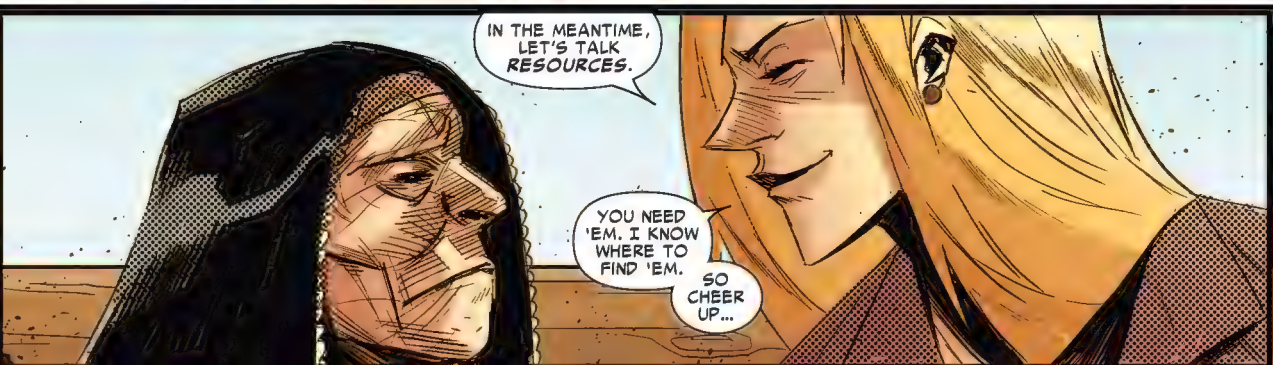
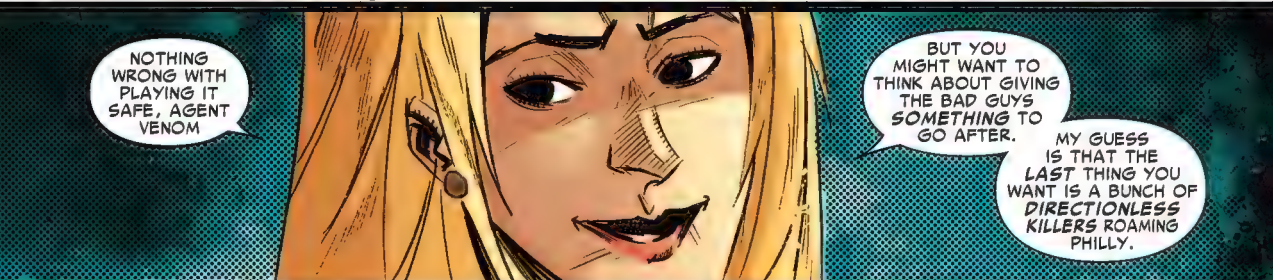
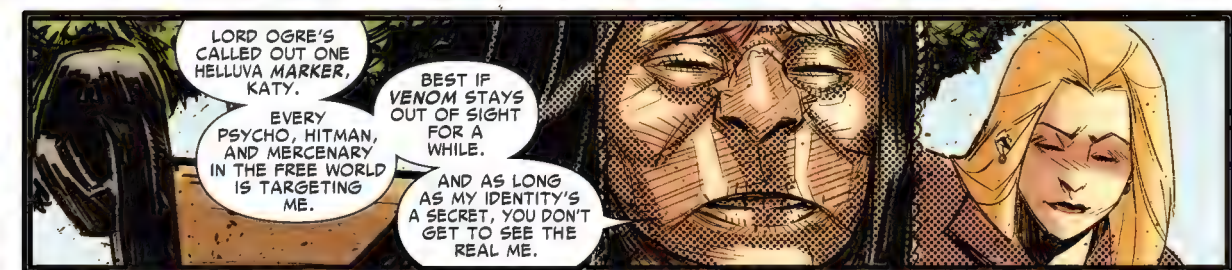
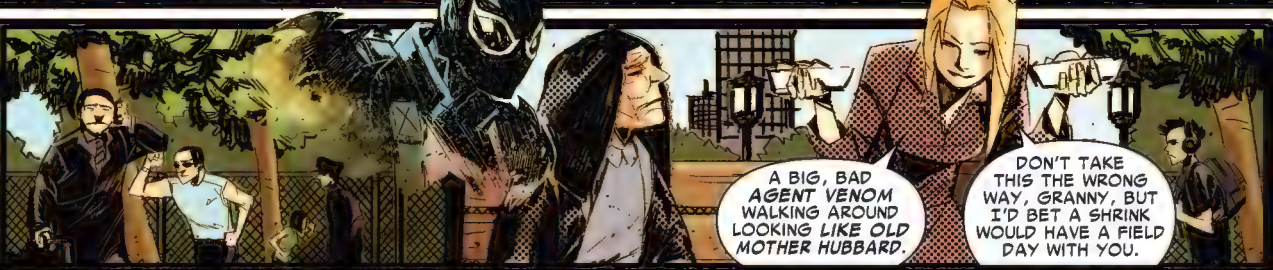
I MEAN...
LOOK...YOUR
MOM HAD SECRETS
I ONLY WISH I
COULD HAVE
TALKED TO HER
ABOUT.

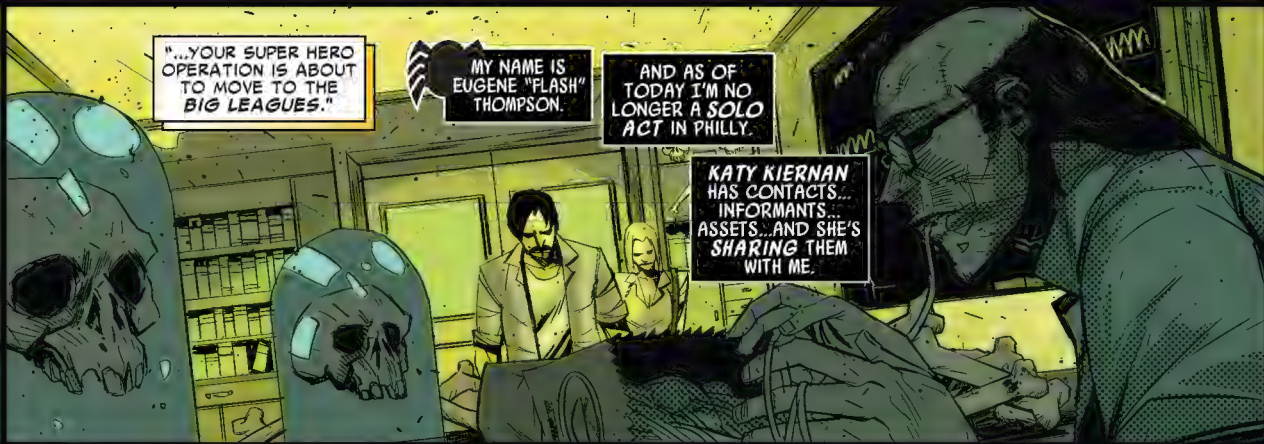


I GUESS
THAT'S NOT
MUCH HELP.

I CAN'T
SAY THAT
I'VE EVER BEEN
GOOD AT THE
WHOLE "FATHERLY
ADVICE"
THING.

WELL...





"...YOUR SUPER HERO OPERATION IS ABOUT TO MOVE TO THE BIG LEAGUES."

MY NAME IS EUGENE "FLASH" THOMPSON.

AND AS OF TODAY I'M NO LONGER A SOLO ACT IN PHILLY.

KATY KIERNAN HAS CONTACTS... INFORMANTS... ASSETS... AND SHE'S SHARING THEM WITH ME.



LET'S FACE IT-- THIS LONE WOLF BUSINESS ISN'T WORKING OUT.

I'M OUT HERE WITHOUT THE AID OF THE GOVERNMENT... WITHOUT THE AVENGERS... WITHOUT A SAFETY NET.

BAM

BAM BAM



AND IF I'M GONNA BE THE HERO THE CITY DESERVES, THEN I NEED MY OWN NETWORK.

SPIES, ALLIES, FRIENDLIES... WHO MIGHT GIVE ME AN EDGE OVER THE BAD GUYS.



I NEED AN ACE OR TWO HIDDEN IN MY SYMBIOTIC SLEEVE.

BECAUSE I'M A LITTLE TIRED OF THE BAD GUYS--MEN LIKE LORD OGRE--HOLDING ALL THE CARDS.

SHZZIING

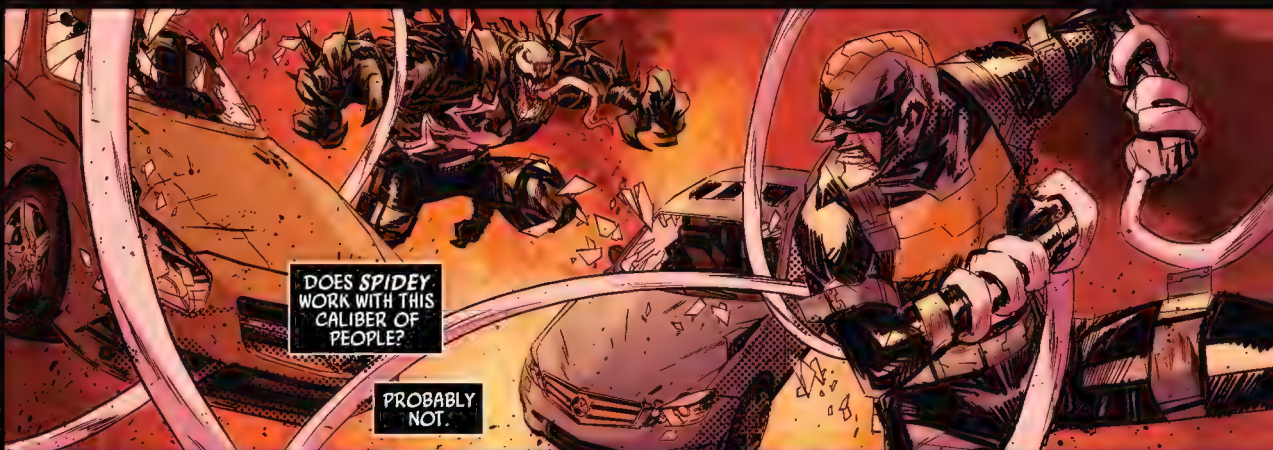
SHZZIING



I'LL ADMIT...IT'S A LITTLE SCARY...THE PEOPLE KATY KNOWS.

NEED INFORMATION ON BIGFOOT? YOU GOT IT. WANT TO KNOW WHAT THE MAYOR HAD FOR DINNER? NO WORRIES.

A SKRULL PARTICLE WEAPON? WHAT MAKE AND MODEL?



DOES SPIDEY WORK WITH THIS CALIBER OF PEOPLE?

PROBABLY NOT.



BUT I'M NOT THE SPIDER.

WE PLAY ON DIFFERENT FIELDS.



WE'RE PLAYING DIFFERENT GAMES ALTOGETHER.



HELL... I GREW
UP IDOLIZING
THE GUY...

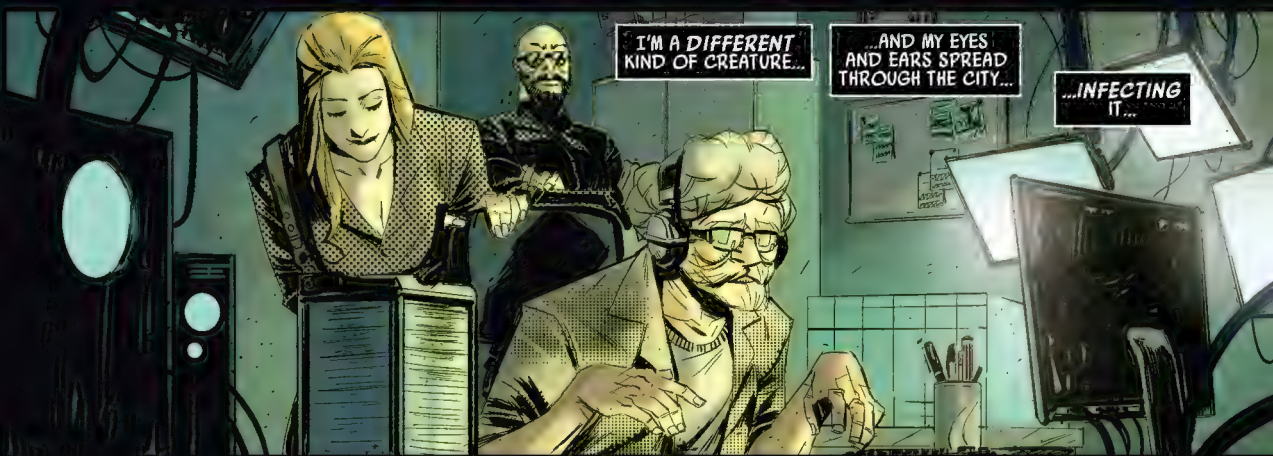
...STILL
DO...

BUT I'LL NEVER
GET THE HANG OF
HOW HE DOES
THINGS.



IT'S TIME
TO STOP
PRETENDING...

...AND START
DOING THINGS
MY WAY.



I'M A DIFFERENT
KIND OF CREATURE...

...AND MY EYES
AND EARS SPREAD
THROUGH THE CITY...

...INFECTING
IT...



...PHILLY
IS MY HOST
ORGANISM...

...AND I'M THE
SYMBIOTE.

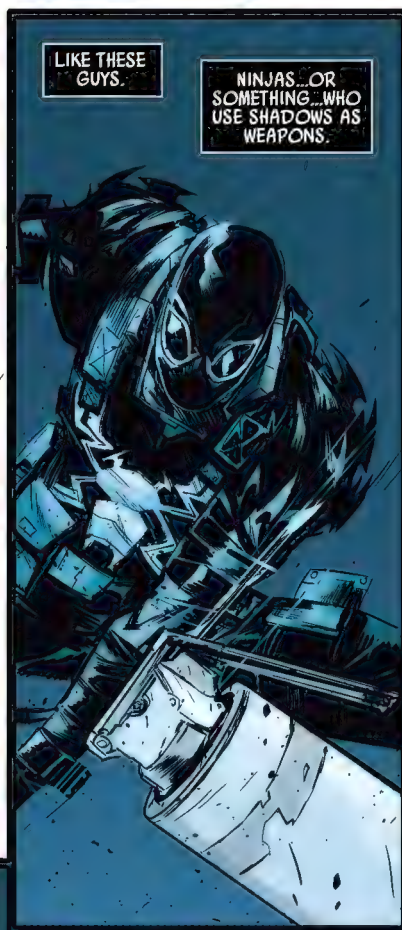


NO TELLING
HOW MANY HIRED
GUNS LORD OGRE
HAS BROUGHT
INTO TOWN.



SEEMS LIKE THEY CRAWL OUT OF
THE WOODWORK AT EVERY TURN.

ONE ASSASSIN:
MORE FREAKY
THAN THE LAST.



LIKE THESE
GUYS.

NINJAS...OR
SOMETHING...WHO
USE SHADOWS AS
WEAPONS.



I CAN'T WAIT
TO SEE
WHAT'S NEXT.



COME ON!
BUY A
VOWEL IF YOU
NEED TO BUT--
COME ON!



THE
ANSWER'S RIGHT
THERE! RIGHT IN
FRONT OF YOUR
FACE!

I COULD'VE
SOLVED THE
PUZZLE THREE
LETTERS
AGO!

GETTING
A LITTLE
WORKED UP,
AREN'T YOU,
DAD?



IT'S
JUST A
GAME.

YOU KNOW...
I'VE BEEN
WATCHING THIS GAME...
ALMOST EVERY NIGHT...
SINCE LONG BEFORE
YOU WERE BORN,
MY DEAR.



NOW THERE'S AN
ACCOMPLISHMENT.

I HOPE
THAT'S ON YOUR
RESUME.

OF
COURSE.

IT'S LISTED
RIGHT ALONGSIDE
"SKILLED AT RAISING
SMART-MOUTHED
BRATS."

WHERE'RE
YOU GOING?
WANT ME TO
PAUSE THIS?



NAH.
I'M
GONNA GET
SOME AIR.

BESIDES...
I SOLVED THE
PUZZLE FOUR
LETTERS
AGO.





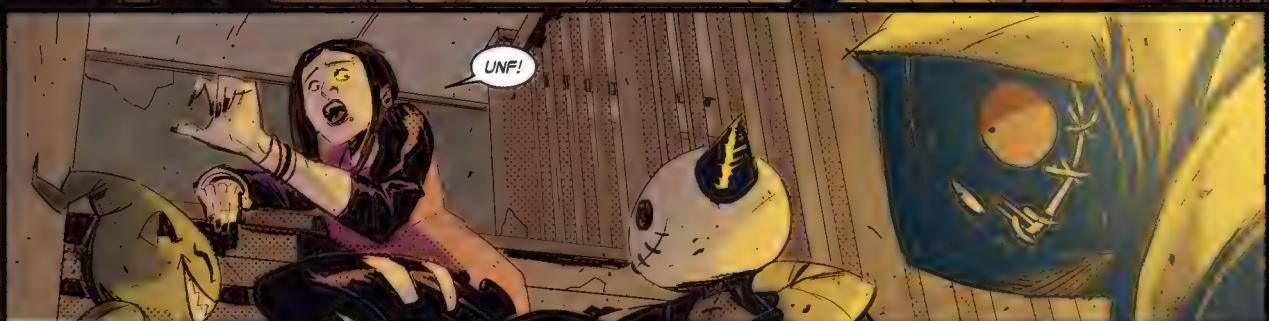
I'M AFRAID
EUGENE ISN'T
HOME RIGHT
NOW.

BUT
COME ON IN,
"ANDI."

ANY TRUE
CONFESSIONS YOU
MIGHT WANT TO SHARE
WITH "MR. THOMPSON,"
YOU CAN SHARE WITH
GOOD OL' JACK
O'LANTERN..

I'M
A GOOD
LISTENER.

BESIDES...
I NEED TO
LEAVE OUR
CRIPPLED FRIEND
A MESSAGE
MYSELF...







KNOCK
KNOCK!

Who's
dere?

Who's
dere?



GO...
ANDI...

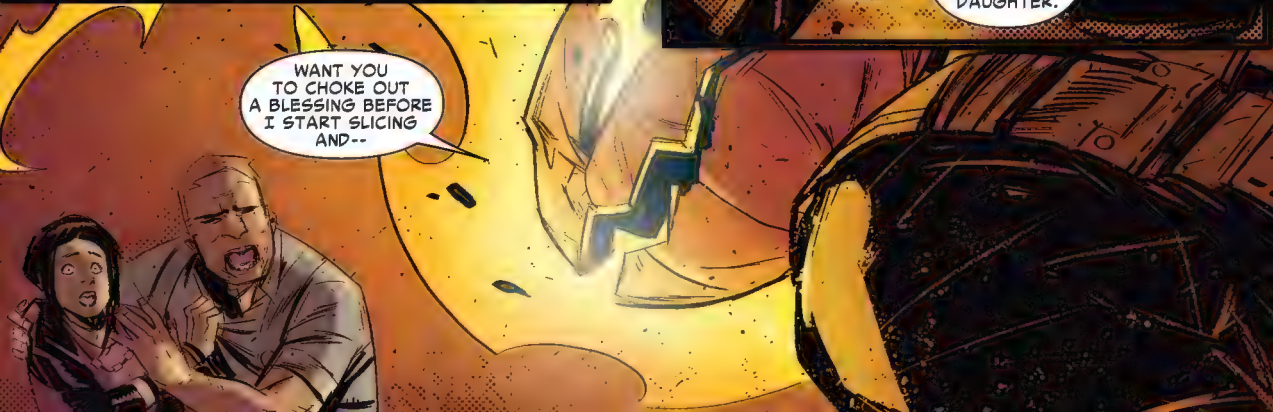
TRY TO
GET TO
THE FIRE
ESCAPE.



THE
GANG'S
ALL HERE,
HUH?

GOOD...
BECAUSE YOU
AND I NEED TO
CHAT, DADDY
DEAREST.

I WANT
TO EXPLAIN
MY INTENTIONS
WITH YOUR
DAUGHTER.



WANT YOU
TO CHOKE OUT
A BLESSING BEFORE
I START SLICING
AND--



GET AWAY FROM THEM!

GGGKK!

KRAASH



HOW IN THE @##% DID JACK O'LANTERN GET OUT OF PRISON?

YOU'D THINK SOMEBODY MIGHT HAVE WARNED ME?

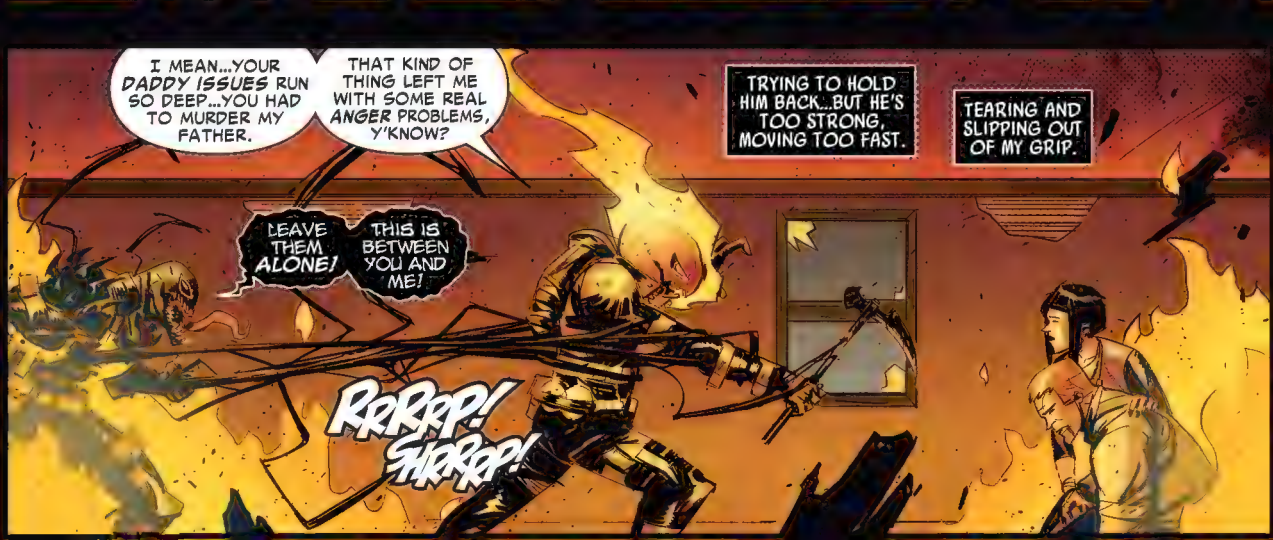
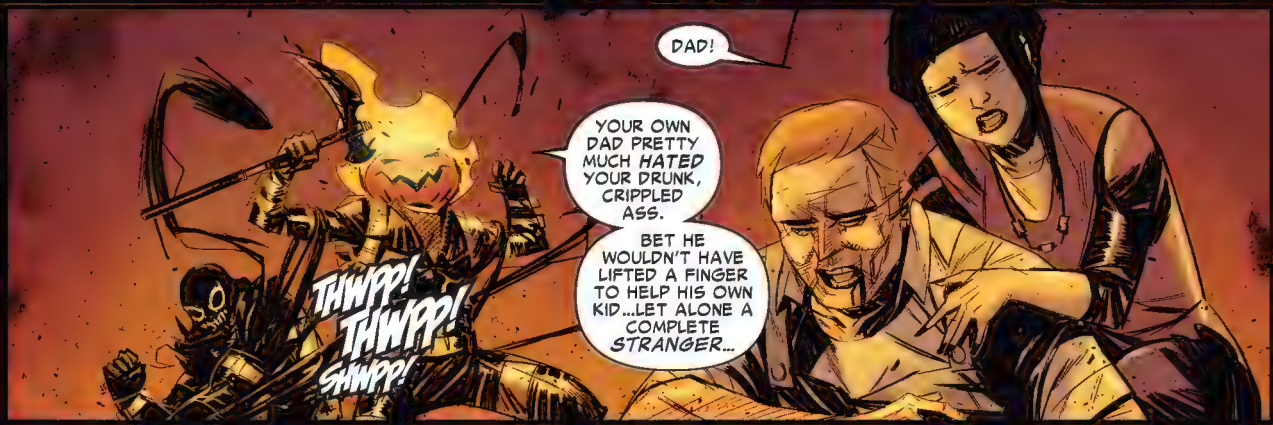
VRRRRR

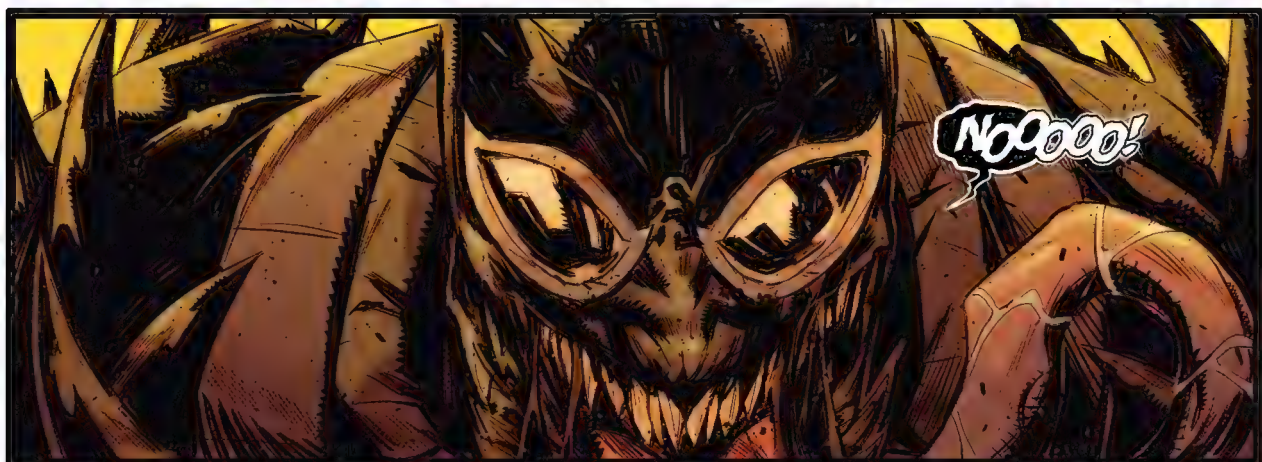


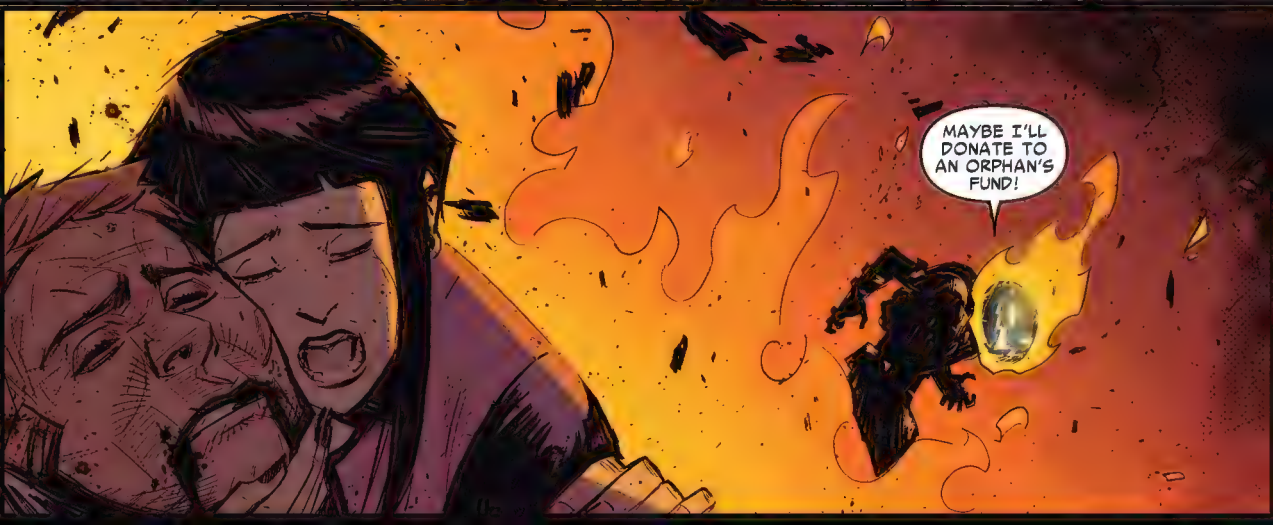
GUY'S THE WORST SORT OF MANIAC.

ALWAYS KNEW HE'D TURN UP AGAIN...ALWAYS KNEW HE'D TRY TO GET TO ME THROUGH THE PEOPLE I CARE ABOUT.









THE LANTERN'S
TOYING WITH ME.

HERE,
ANDI...
CATCH!

WANTS
TO SEE ME
SUFFER.

SWOOSH

POISON GAS.

IF I KNOW JACK,
IT'LL BE FAST-ACTING...
PAINFUL...LETHAL.

TSSSSSSSS

HE WANTS ME TO KNOW
I CAN'T PROTECT THE
PEOPLE AROUND ME.

WANTS ME TO
KNOW...THEY'RE IN
DANGER...
BECAUSE OF ME.

COULDN'T
SAVE ANDI'S
DAD...

+Kaff!+
+Koff!+
+Kaff!+

...BUT I'M NOT
GONNA LET
HER DIE!

THE SYMBIOTE
ACTS AS LIFE
SUPPORT...

...FILTERING
HAZARDS LIKE
POISON FROM
THE AIR.

IF I EXTEND
PART OF VENOM
TO ANDI, I
MIGHT JUST--



--MAKE SOMETHING
COMPLETELY
UNEXPECTED
HAPPEN.

UH...
...COACH?!

To Be
Continued...

SYMBIOWROTE

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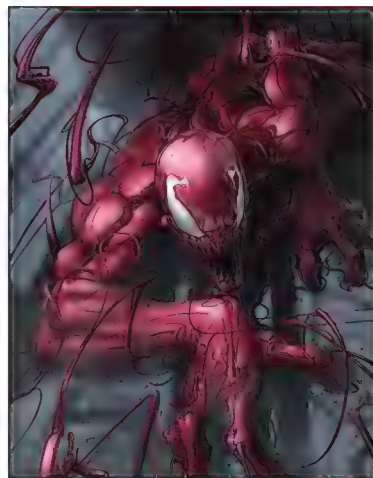
NEXT!



SUPERIOR SPIDER-MAN #14



SCARLET SPIDER #19



SUPERIOR CARNAGE #1

VENOM



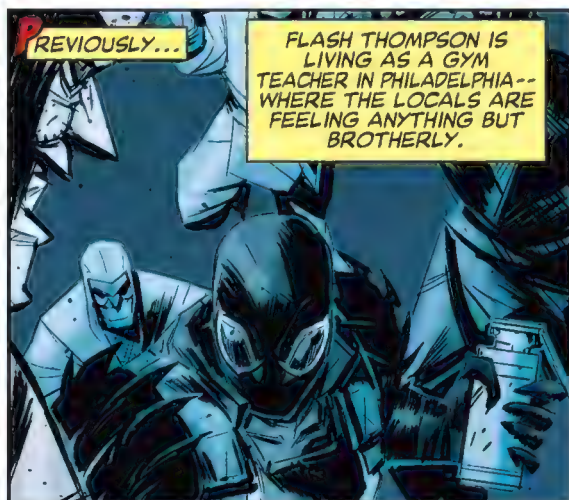
MARVEL

**BUNN
JACINTO
LOUGHRIDGE**

039

Eugene "Flash" Thompson was a high school bully turned war hero, inspired by the Amazing Spider-Man to get his act together. When he lost both legs in combat, his country gave him a chance to serve again, bonding him with the alien parasite suit that grants its host powers similar to Spider-Man. From that day on, he was the Secret Avenger known as...

VENOM

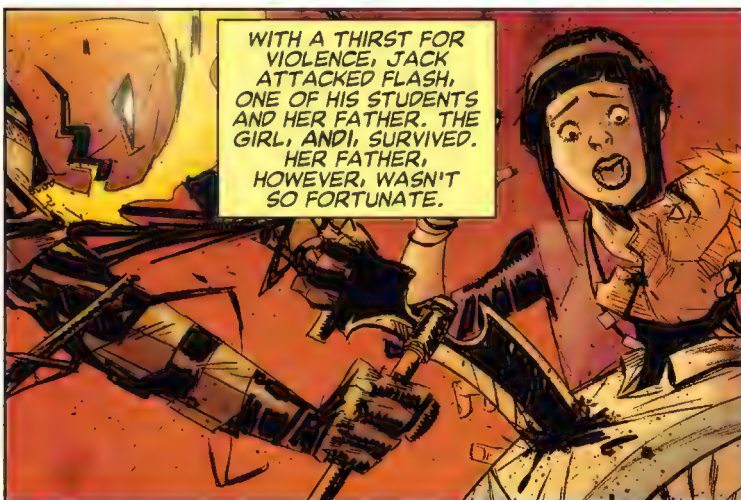


PREVIOUSLY...

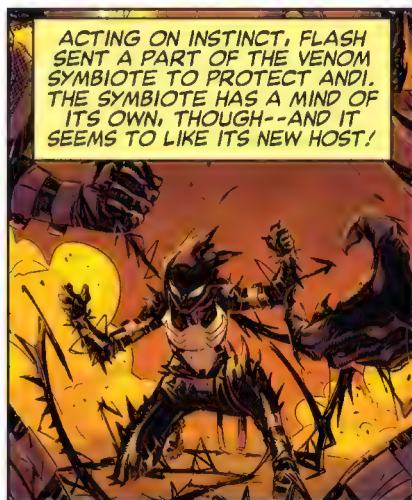
FLASH THOMPSON IS LIVING AS A GYM TEACHER IN PHILADELPHIA-- WHERE THE LOCALS ARE FEELING ANYTHING BUT BROTHERLY.



THE MAN IN CHARGE OF THE CITY'S CRIMINAL UNDERWORLD? LORD OGRE, A DRUG DEALER AND HUMAN-TRAFFICKER WITH TIES TO SOME SERIOUS SUPER VILLAINY-- INCLUDING FLASH'S OLD FOE, JACK O'LANTERN.



WITH A THIRST FOR VIOLENCE, JACK ATTACKED FLASH, ONE OF HIS STUDENTS AND HER FATHER. THE GIRL, ANDI, SURVIVED. HER FATHER, HOWEVER, WASN'T SO FORTUNATE.



ACTING ON INSTINCT, FLASH SENT A PART OF THE VENOM SYMBIOTE TO PROTECT ANDI. THE SYMBIOTE HAS A MIND OF ITS OWN, THOUGH--AND IT SEEMS TO LIKE ITS NEW HOST!

CULLEN BUNN

writer

KIM JACINTO w/ MIKE HENDERSON

artist

(pages 16-20)

LEE LOUGHRIDGE

color art

VC's JOE CARAMAGNA

letters

DECLAN SHALVEY & JORDIE BELLAIRE

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DAN BUCKLEY
publisher

ALAN FINE
exec. producer

Andi Benton's
Apartment.

I...
I...
WHAT IS...
THIS?

WHAT...

WHAT
DID YOU
DO... TO...
ME?



I THINK
SHE'S TALKING
TO YOU,
HOSS.

JACK O'LANTERN...
TRIED TO POISON
ANDI...WOULD HAVE
KILLED HER.

I WANTED TO
USE THE SYMBIOTE
TO PROTECT HER.

BUT...NOT
LIKE THIS.





ACTED ON
INSTINCT.

BUT THE
SYMBIOTE'S BEEN
TWITCHY LATELY.

DAD?



NO...THAT'S NOT
RIGHT. THE SYMBIOTE'S
NOT SOME HOUSE-
HOLD APPLIANCE.

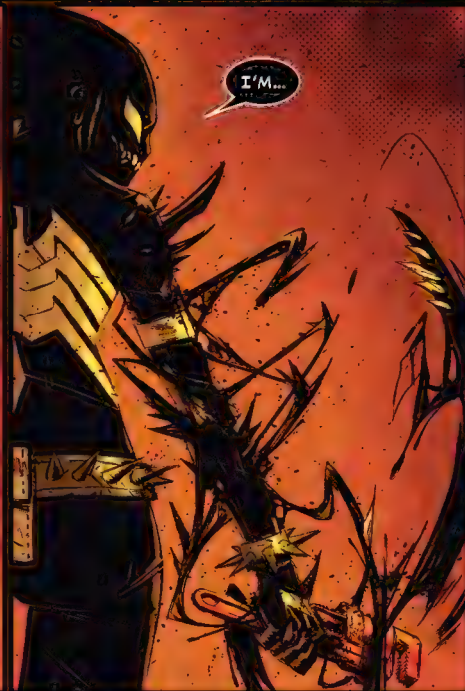
YOU...
MURDERED
HIM.

IT'S ALIVE.
IT HAS A MIND
OF ITS OWN.



IT'S
UNPREDICTABLE.

TRY AS I
MIGHT, I CAN'T
CONTROL IT.



I'M...



...GONNA...

SGGKGLK



KILL
YOU!

TH-THWOK!





KILL
THIS!

WHOMP!

THE LANTERN'S A
WALKING, TALKING
NIGHTMARE.

RRRG

THE BLOOD ON
HIS HANDS WILL
NEVER COME
CLEAN.

IF HE GOES BACK
TO PRISON...HE'S
JUST GOING TO
BREAK OUT AGAIN...
KILL AGAIN.

NOT
GONNA
HAPPEN.



HE'S
FINISHED.

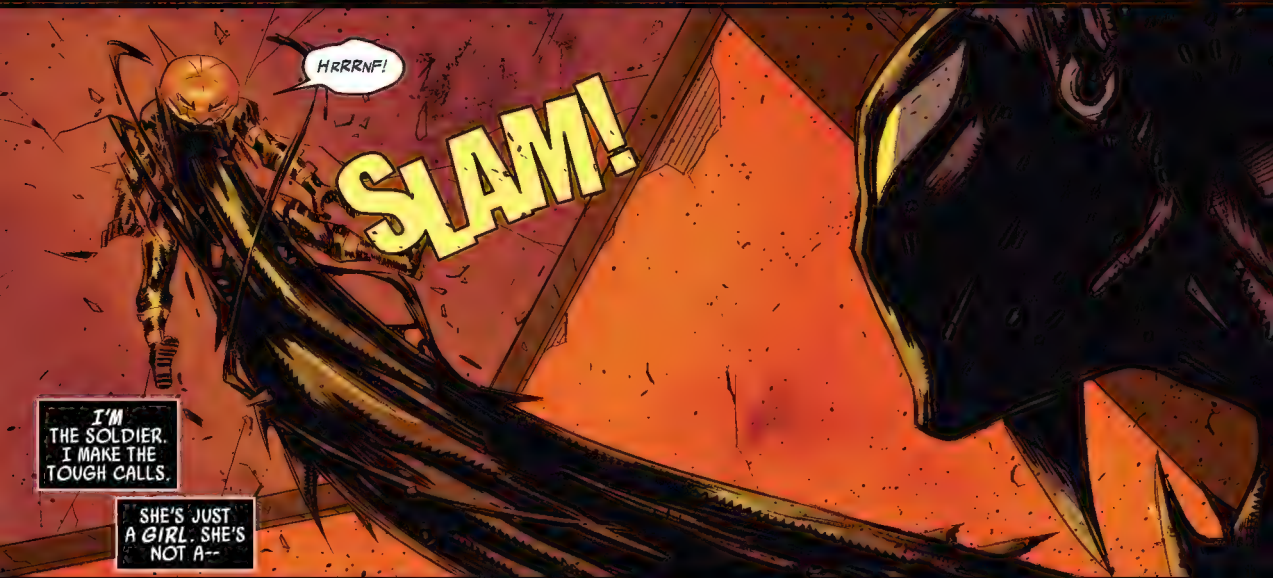
ONCE AND
FOR ALL.

KRASH



BUT I'M NOT
GOING TO LET
AND! KILL HIM.

JACK IS MY
RESPONSIBILITY,
NOT HERS.



HRRRN!

SLAM!

I'M
THE SOLDIER.
I MAKE THE
TOUGH CALLS.

SHE'S JUST
A GIRL. SHE'S
NOT A--



--KILLER.

PRAAAAAGHH!



**GET
OFF!**

AND!!
NO!

**LET
GO!**



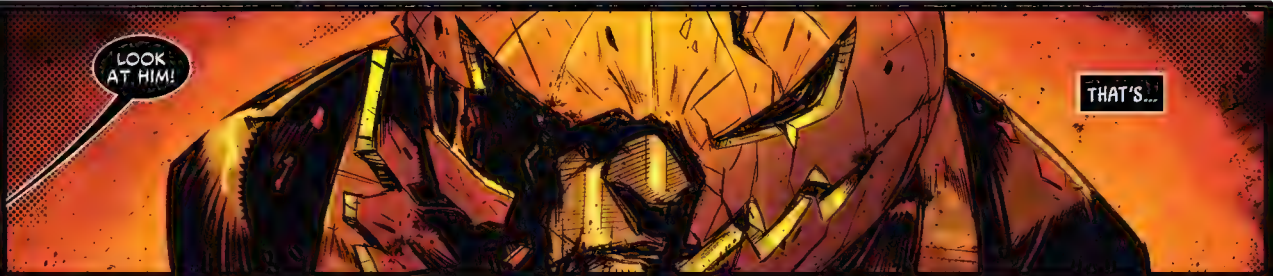
GET
OFF ME!

LET ME
KILL THIS
PIECE OF
@#%!

THAT'S
NOT GONNA
HAPPEN!

CALM
DOWN!

LOOK
AT HIM!



LOOK
AT HIM!

THAT'S...



THAT'S
NOT JACK
O'LANTERN!

BUT HOW--



WHO THE
@#% ARE
YOU?

HOW
DID YOU
KNOW WHO
I AM?

HOW DID
YOU FIND
ME?



DON'T
YOU GET IT,
EUGENE?

YOU'RE
NEVER GONNA
SLIP AWAY
FROM US.

YOU
CAN'T RUN
FAR ENOUGH
OR FAST
ENOUGH.

YOU CAN'T
HIDE BEHIND A
MASK OR BOTTLE
OR A TEACHING
POSITION.

NO
MATTER WHAT
YOU DO, YOU'RE
GONNA PAY FOR
YOUR SINS.

WE'RE
JACK, BABY...
AND WE'RE
EVERYWHERE!

"O' COURSE,
JUST A FEW
WEEKS AGO, I
WAS JUST A
NOBODY."

"WORKING AT
A STORAGE
FACILITY, DAY IN
AND DAY OUT."

"I DIDN'T HAVE A CLUE
THAT JACK--THE REAL
JACK, WHO'S STILL
COOLING HIS HEELS IN
PRISON--HAD LEFT ME A
LITTLE SURPRISE IN
ONE OF THE UNITS."

Help me...
help...pwease
help me...

Pwlease
help me...
help...save
me...

SNAP

E 40-50

Oh, my
hewo!

Wook
into my
eyes!

"MY HEAD...USELESS AS IT
WAS UP UNTIL THAT MOMENT...
WAS SUDDENLY PACKED WITH
ALL THE GOOD STUFF..."

"ALL THE JUICY
LITTLE MORSELS THAT
THE REAL JACK HAD
RECORDED BEFORE
BEING APPREHENDED."

"THIS MEAT SACK'S
WEAK LITTLE MIND
WAS OVERWRITTEN SO
JACK'S GOOD WORK
COULD CONTINUE."

AND BY
"GOOD WORK" I MEAN
THE WHOLESALE SLAUGHTER
OF EVERY BANAL LITTLE
LAMB WHO JUST MEWLS
THROUGH THE DAY-TO-
DAY GRIND.

AND--
OF COURSE--
REVENGE FOR
THE SENSELESS
MURDER OF
MY DAD.

HMM. WHO
DID THAT
AGAIN?

OH,
YEAH--
YOU.

I'VE
HEARD
ENOUGH.
TIME TO--

NO!

DON'T
YOU SEE?
THIS GUY'S A
VICTIM.

HE
KILLED MY
DAD!

HE'S BEEN
HYPNOTIZED OR
MIND-CONTROLLED
OR WHATEVER.

THE
REAL GUY...
HE NEVER
WANTED
THIS.

THAT'S
RIGHT.

I WAS
FORCED
INTO MY LITTLE
PREDICAMENT,
GIRL.

BUT I
GOTTA TELL
YA...

A LOT
LIKE YOU WERE
FORCED INTO
YOURS.

...IT
HURTS SO
GOOD!

HE'S
GETTING
AWAY!

CRASH



I'M WRONG.
AGAIN.

SHOCKER.

IN EVERY WAY
THAT MATTERS,
THIS GUY IS JACK
O'LANTERN.

THAT MEANS
HE'LL LEAVE A
BODY COUNT
ANYWHERE HE
GOES.

NO TIME
TO WAIT.

NO TIME TO FIGURE
OUT WHAT THE HELL
IS GOING ON WITH
ANDI.

THERE'S NO TELLING
HOW MANY PEOPLE
MIGHT DIE IF I DON'T
BRING HIM DOWN.



FIRST I WANT
TO KILL HIM...
THEN I DON'T.
THEN I WANT TO.

I DUNNO.

MAKE A
DECISION,
THOMPSON!

HOLD
ON!

WAIT
FOR ME!



I CAN'T
LET YOU
COME WITH
ME, ANDI.

AS IF I HAVE
ANY IDEA WHAT THE
RIGHT DECISION
MIGHT BE.

WHAT ARE
YOU TALKING
ABOUT?

HE'S
GETTING
AWAY!

THE GUY WHO
KILLED MY DAD IS
SLIPPING RIGHT
THROUGH YOUR
FINGERS!

AND
YOU CAN'T
STOP
ME!



YEAH.

I CAN.



GOTTA MAKE
THE RIGHT
CALL HERE.

WE CAN SORT
EVERYTHING
OUT LATER.

FOR NOW, YOU
JUST NEED TO
WAIT THIS OUT...
SOMEWHERE
SAFE.



A TEENAGER RUNNING
AROUND WEARING A
PIECE OF THE VENOM
SYMBIOTE.



SHE'LL GET
HERSELF
KILLED.

NOT IF
I CALL IT
BACK--



ARE YOU
DONE?

DIDN'T
WORK.



COULDN'T
RETRIEVE THE
SYMBIOTE.

BUT IT'S JUST A
SATELLITE, A
FRAGMENT. THE
BOND SHOULDN'T
BE...



...PERMANENT.

WHATEVER
THAT WAS--

--DON'T--

--TRY IT
AGAIN!



AND GET
OUT OF MY
WAY.



THE STRENGTH,
THE SPEED, THE
AGILITY...

...THE WEB-
SLINGING...THE
POWERS...

...SHE ADAPTED SO
QUICKLY, LIKE SHE'S
BEEN WEARING THE
SYMBIOTE FOR YEARS
INSTEAD OF MINUTES.



SHE'S A
NATURAL.

HOW IS SHE
A NATURAL?

THIS ISN'T
GONNA END
WELL.



YEEAARGH!

SHHRAK

UNNF!

WHAT
THE HELL
IS THIS?



THIS AIN'T
VENOM.

IT'S LIKE...
SOME KID
DRESSED AS
VENOM.

THOSE'RE
GOOD EYES
YOU'VE GOT THERE,
CONSTRUCTOR.

BUT THIS
IS THE NEXT
BEST THING.

THIS IS
VENOM'S LITTLE
SIDEKICK.

IT'S
COOL.

YOU
CAN KILL
HER.



FIRST OF
ALL, LET'S GET
SOMETHING
CLEAR.

I DON'T
WORK FOR YOU,
SO DON'T TELL ME
WHO I CAN AND
CAN'T ICE.

SECOND OF
ALL, I MIGHT BE
A BAD GUY, BUT
I AIN'T GONNA
HURT A KID.

AND I
WON'T LET
YOU DO IT,
EITHER.



OKAY...
I ADMIRE A
GUY WITH
PRINCIPLES.

BUT...

YOU
SHOULDA
TOLD HIM
THAT.

GET
AWAY FROM
HER!

RRULLINNE!

WOOMPFF!

LORD OGRE...THE LOCAL
CRIME LORD...HIRED--I
DUNNO--A COUPLE DOZEN
ASSASSINS TO TAKE ME
OUT OF THE PICTURE.

ALL OF
YOU--

BLAM!

BLAM!

--BACK
OFF!

BLAM!

KTING

KTING

KTING

JACK O'LANTERN LED
US STRAIGHT INTO
THEIR WAITING ARMS.



NICE
SAVE.
THANKS.



NO
PROBLEM,
COACH.



ISN'T THAT
SWEET!
THE STUDENT
BECOMES THE
TEACHER!

BUT THIS IS
THE PART OF THE
MOVIE WHERE MR.
MIYAGI GETS HIS HEAD
LOPPED OFF AND HIS
BRAINS SCOOPED
OUT!





THAT'S
HOW THE
MOVIE ENDS,
RIGHT?



WOOFF!

SLAM!



AND IT'S HIGH ON
THE SYMBIOTE'S
POWER.

IT'S FUELING
HER ANGER...



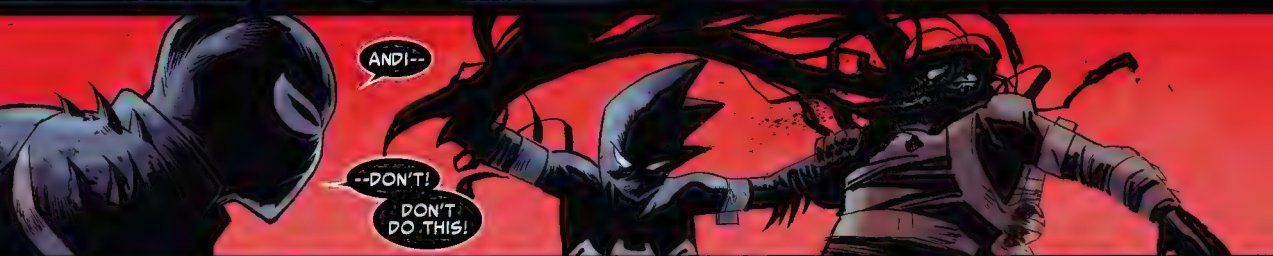
...USING RAW
EMOTION TO
CEMENT THE BOND
BETWEEN THEM...

URGING
HER TO SEAL
THE DEAL...

...IN
BLOOD.



GRRRKKCCCK!



AND!--

--DON'T!
DON'T
DO THIS!



SHE'S NOT
GONNA
LISTEN.

YOU GO
DOWN THIS
PATH...
...THERE'S
NO COMING
BACK.

NOT LIKE THE
SUIT *EVER*
LISTENED
TO ME.



NOT LIKE I
EVER LISTENED
MYSELF.

GNNGGK

WHY?
WHY'D YOU
DO THIS
TO ME?

THIS GUY
DOESN'T DESERVE
ANOTHER SECOND
ON EARTH!

NOT IF
MY DAD DOESN'T
GET ONE!

WHY'D YOU
GIVE ME THIS POWER
IF YOU DIDN'T WANT
ME TO USE IT?



I WAS
TRYING TO
PROTECT
YOU.

AND...NOT
GONNA LIE...IF I
COULD TAKE THAT
SYMBIOTE BACK,
I WOULD.

I DON'T
KNOW WHAT
HAPPENED...
WHAT WENT
WRONG...

BUT I DO
KNOW WEARING
THAT SUIT
COMES WITH
A COST.

IF YOU
LET ME, I'LL
SHOULDER SOME
OF THE BURDEN
WITH YOU.



BUT
IF YOU KILL
HIM...WHETHER HE
DESERVES IT OR
NOT...YOU'RE ON
YOUR OWN.

EVEN IF
YOU HAD THE
WORLD ON YOUR
SIDE...YOU'LL BE
ALONE.

I'M
TELLING YOU...
I KNOW WHAT
I'M TALKING
ABOUT.

COME
ON, KID.



MAKE
THE RIGHT
CHOICE.



AND...I
PROMISE YOU...
WE'LL FIGURE
THIS OUT.

ALL
OF IT.

BUT FOR
NOW...

FREE-000-REEL-0 FREE-ROO



"...IT'S TIME
TO GET
GONE."



TOOK A FEW DAYS
FOR THINGS TO
SETTLE DOWN.

CAN'T SAY THAT
ANYTHING'S BACK
TO **NORMAL**,
THOUGH.

NOT SURE I'VE
EVER SEEN THE
RIGHT SIDE OF
NORMAL.

BUT I DO
MY BEST TO
FAKE IT...

ALONE

AFTER HER FATHER'S
FUNERAL, AND I MOVED
IN WITH HER AUNT IN
JENKINTOWN.

WE KEEP IN
TOUCH, OF COURSE.

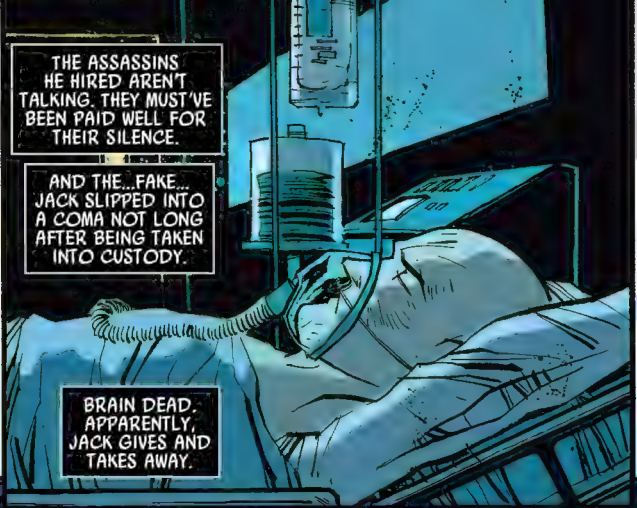
ONE OF MY NEW
SUPPLIERS HOOKED
US UP WITH
UNTRACEABLE
STARKPHONES.

THINK OF THEM
AS THE **VENOM-
HOTLINE**.



I'VE GOT MY EAR
TO THE GROUND.

CONTACTS DIGGING
UP EVERYTHING THEY
CAN ON LORD OGRE'S
OPERATION.



THE ASSASSINS
HE HIRED AREN'T
TALKING. THEY MUST'VE
BEEN PAID WELL FOR
THEIR SILENCE.

AND THE...FAKE...
JACK SLIPPED INTO
A COMA NOT LONG
AFTER BEING TAKEN
INTO CUSTODY.

BRAIN DEAD.
APPARENTLY,
JACK GIVES AND
TAKES AWAY.



I'VE ASKED ANDI TO
KEEP HER COOL...TO LAY
LOW UNTIL I CAN FIGURE
OUT HER...

...SITUATION.

I DON'T THINK SHE'S
REALLY HONORING
THE AGREEMENT,
THOUGH. SHE
KEEPS BUSY.



IN THE UNANSWERED
QUESTIONS
DEPARTMENT, I'M
NECK DEEP.

HOW DID MY
SYMBIOTE SPAWN
ANOTHER LIKE
THAT?

AND HOW DID
ANDI GET UP
TO SPEED SO
QUICKLY?



I THINK
I KNOW WHO
TO ASK.

BUT
HE'S NOT
TALKING.

YET.

The End.

SYMBIOWROTE

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Venom-ites! As it goes in comics, with the conclusion of one story we begin another! "Jack O'Lantern" may have been taken care of, but Lord Ogre is still out there—and that's just one part of what we've got planned next. Why is Andi so connected with the symbiote? And who is Flash going after next? We'll tell you in September!

In other news, Kim Jacinto's kinetic and mesmerizing stylings come to a close with this issue, but we're coming back with Jorge Coelho, who delivers a visual punch you'll be asking for more of. Before we jump ahead though, on to your letters!

I am a brand new Venom reader. Issue 36 was my first experience with this title, and when I finished with that I was ready for #37. After issue 37, I am now subscribing, and I am very excited to see what the future holds for Flash as he continues his crusade to bring the evil-doers in Philadelphia to justice. By the way, that last page of issue 37 was simply amazing. So awesome... Keep up the good work on this series! Can't wait for #38!

Trevor Sherman

Welcome aboard, Trevor. Issue 36, was actually my first issue of Venom too—at the editorial helm that is! Glad you're enjoying it fellow-newbie (and thanks for the ego-boost!)

Whatsup!! I just finished reading Venom issue 37, and I had a pretty cool idea. You should make it so Lord Ogre has some affiliation with Flash Thompson (not Venom). Like it would be soo sick if we found out that he is Andi's dad!! You guys could write sooo much based off of that! Like say Venom kills Lord Ogre, and it kinda knows Flash is Venom, then she hates him. Or maybe she could help take him down. And another thing, how come there are no letters printed in the back of the book? It would totally be sick if you guys printed this! Haha especially since it's my first letter ever. Well, I enjoy reading the book, and I hope you guys have even more fun making it. Can't wait for issue 38! Peace Out!!!

Clayton Walker

We didn't print any letters because we were waiting for YOU, so congrats, you made the cut, Clayton. Great ideas, but Cullen has a few other tricks his sleeve, which I have a feeling you'll really enjoy, too.

HA! The Venom-Mobile!?! That was simply inspired. I'm an old time reader and I still remember getting Amazing Spider-Man #300 when I was a kid, so I'm not new to Venom, but I am new to Flash Thompson as Venom. I just started reading the current Venom series and I really like what I've seen. Flash seems to be using the Venom symbiote in new and exciting ways. The last time I was this excited about Venom was when I read What If? #44 What If Venom Had Possessed

the Punisher. In that story the Punisher learns how to use the symbiote to shoot bullets instead of webbing. The Venom-Mobile topped that by a mile. I missed the first 33 issues of this current series (hopefully I'll be able to find them collected in a trade paperback somewhere) so I don't know if Flash has been doing things like this all along, but when I saw the Venom-Mobile I was hooked. This has the potential to make Venom the coolest hero ever. What are the limits of this ability? Come on Cullen Bunn, I dare you to make Flash Thompson one of the most epic heroes in the Marvel Universe. I just want to sit shotgun in the Venom-Mobile as you do it.

Shayne Olson

I gotta say, the Venom-mobile is one of my favorite parts, too. That's just how crazed Cullen's mind is... and it gets wilder.

I just moved from Queens, NY to Philly and I was excited to see that my favorite character moved to Philly with me! It was tough for Flash and me to leave Peter Parker in Queens, but we are making the same adjustments as we are both new to the City of Neighborhoods. I look forward to seeing Venom as well as the monuments that make Philly famous in the upcoming issues.

Eric

Great! Flash could probably use a tour guide, Eric if you're interested. He's being totally boring and only beating up bad guys. I mean, at least go eat a cheesesteak!



GAH! Gotta get this to the printer! See you next month, Marvelites!

Sana

NEXT!



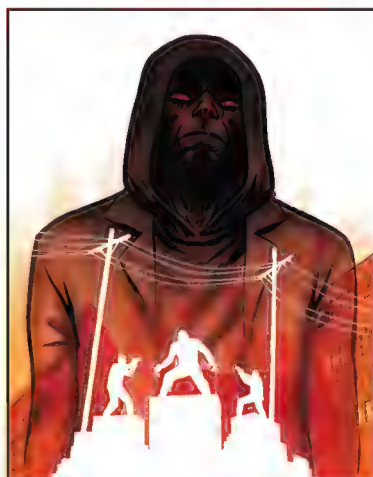
ALSO:



SUPERIOR SPIDER-MAN #16



DAREDEVIL #30



MORBIUS THE LIVING VAMPIRE #8

VENOM



MARVEL

**BUNN
COELHO
LOUGHRIDGE**

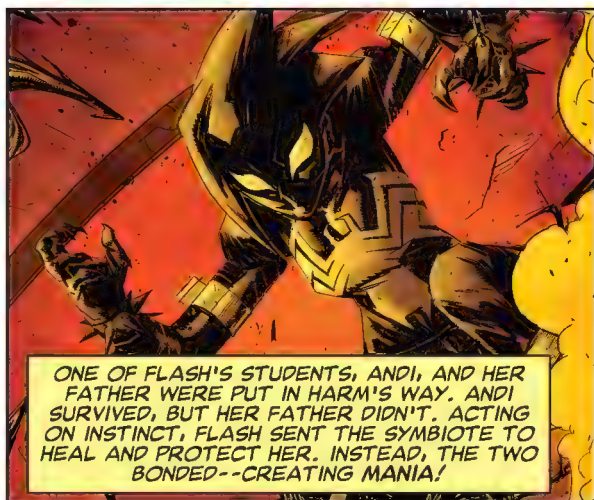
040

Eugene "Flash" Thompson was a high school bully turned war hero, inspired by the Amazing Spider-Man to get his act together. When he lost both legs in combat, his country gave him a chance to serve again, bonding him with the alien parasite suit that grants its host powers similar to Spider-Man. From that day on, he was the Secret Avenger known as...

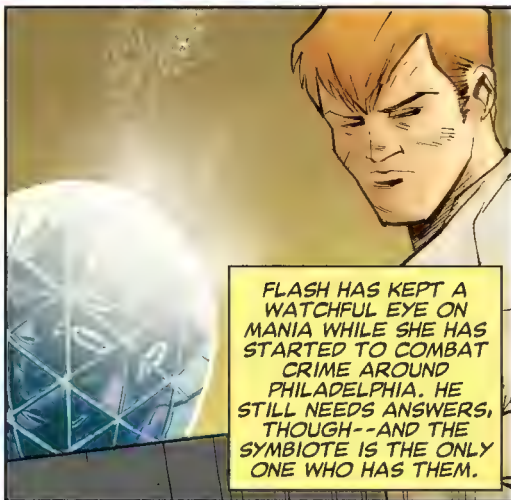
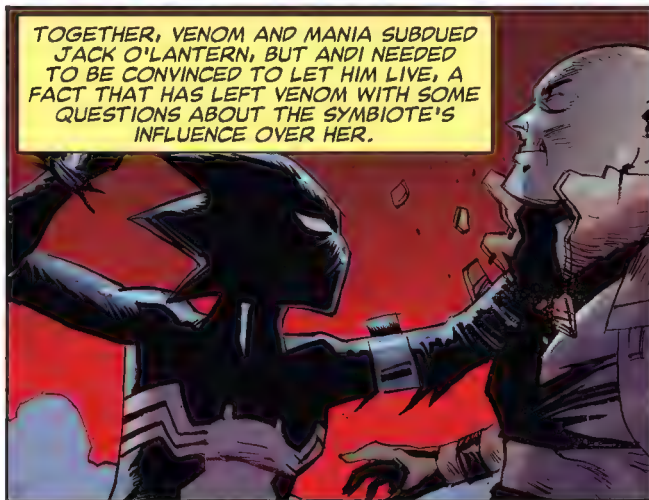
VENOM



FLASH THOMPSON IS LIVING IN PHILADELPHIA AS A SCHOOL TEACHER, AND WHEN THE LOCAL DRUG RUNNER, LORD OGRE, SENT JACK-O-LANTERN AFTER VENOM.



TOGETHER, VENOM AND MANIA SUBDUED JACK O'LANTERN, BUT ANDI NEEDED TO BE CONVINCED TO LET HIM LIVE, A FACT THAT HAS LEFT VENOM WITH SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT THE SYMBIOTE'S INFLUENCE OVER HER.



MANIA part 1 of 3

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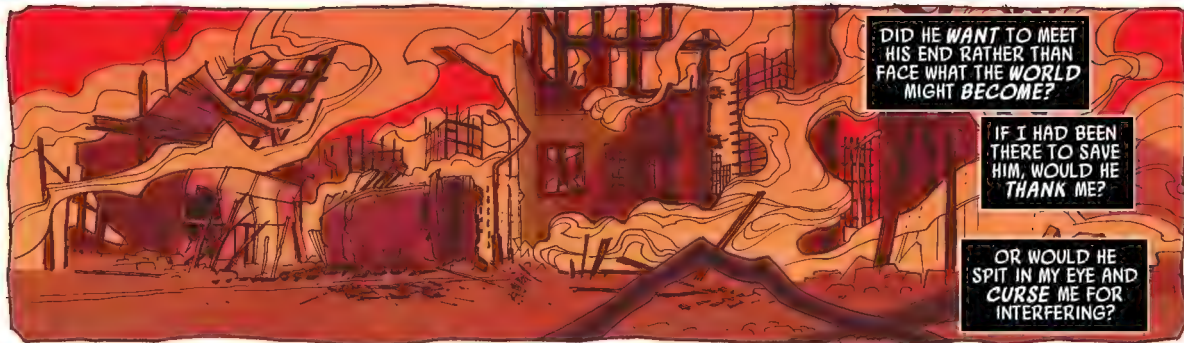
DAN BUCKLEY
publisher

ALAN FINE
exec. producer



A MAN
GETS BEATEN
TO DEATH
IN AN ALLEY.

WHEN HE STEPPED
INTO THE DARKNESS
DID HE **KNOW** HE WAS
GOING TO DIE?



DID HE **WANT** TO MEET
HIS END RATHER THAN
FACE WHAT THE **WORLD**
MIGHT **BECOME**?

IF I HAD BEEN
THERE TO SAVE
HIM, WOULD HE
THANK ME?

OR WOULD HE
SPIT IN MY EYE AND
CURSE ME FOR
INTERFERING?

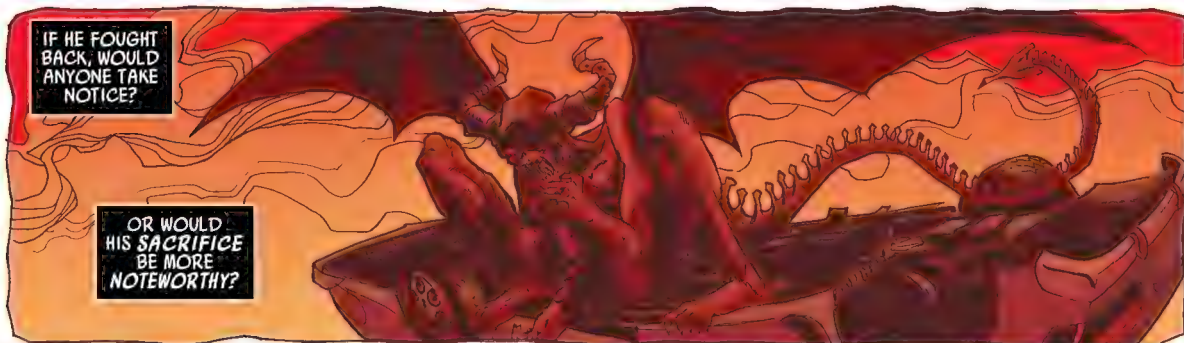


IF HE DIDN'T WANT
TO DIE, HE WOULD
HAVE FOUGHT
BACK, RIGHT?

RAGE.

"**RAGE** AGAINST
THE DYING OF
THE LIGHT."

OR
SOMETHING
LIKE THAT.



IF HE FOUGHT
BACK, WOULD
ANYONE TAKE
NOTICE?

OR WOULD
HIS **SACRIFICE**
BE MORE
NOTEWORTHY?



NO.

THE WORLD
DOESN'T NOTICE
ONE WAY OR
THE OTHER.

THE WORLD'S
GOT BIGGER
PROBLEMS TO
WORRY ABOUT.

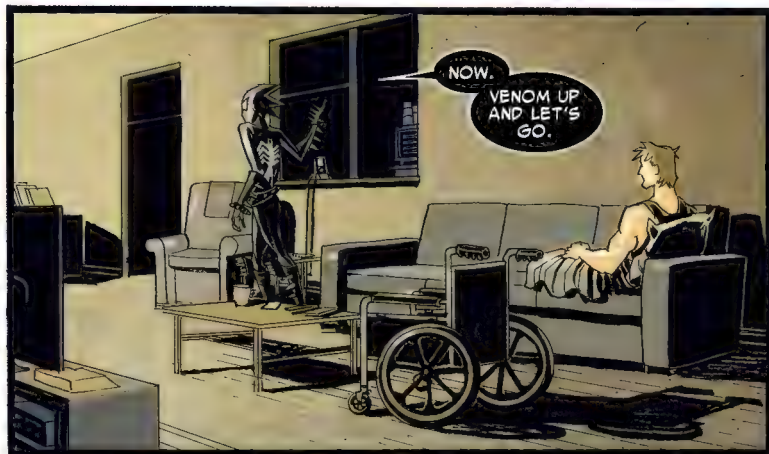
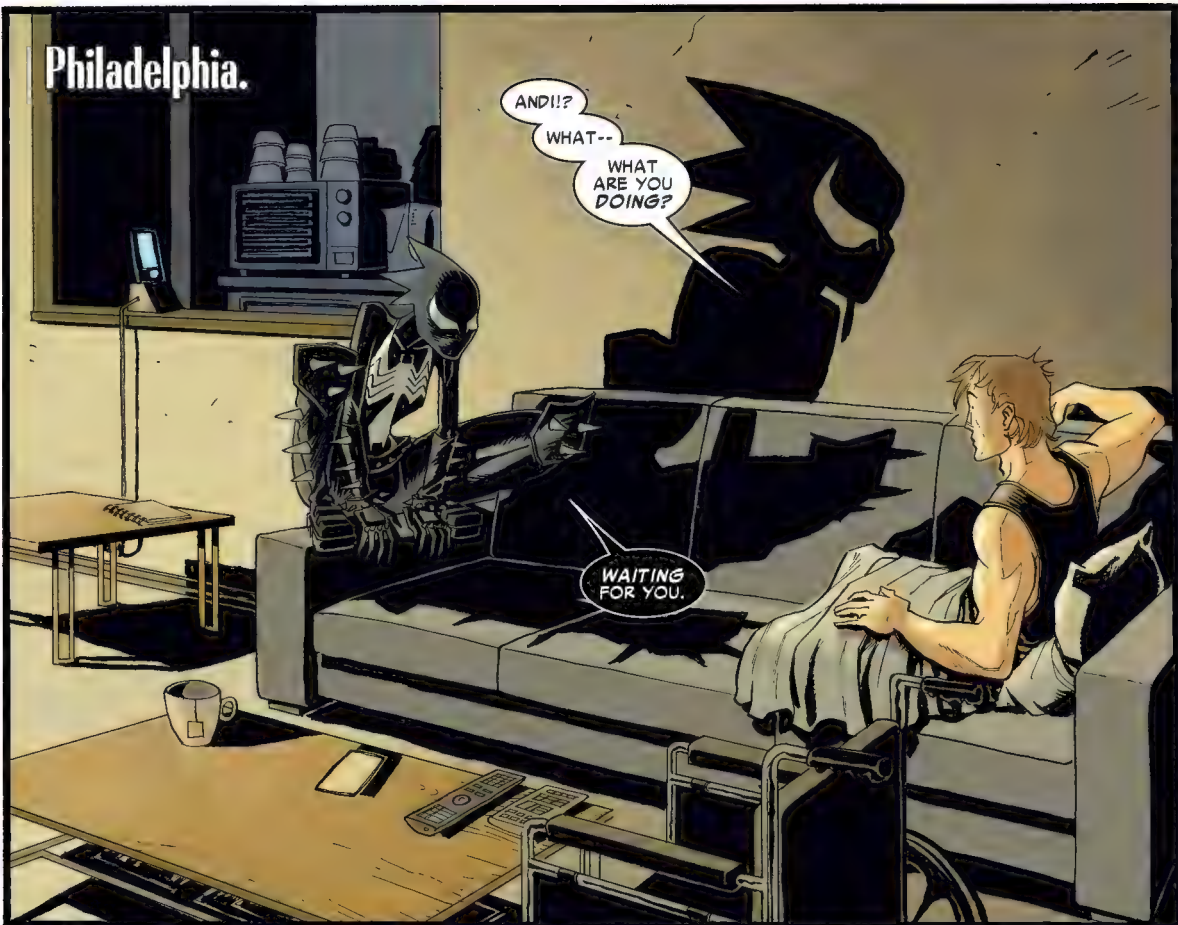


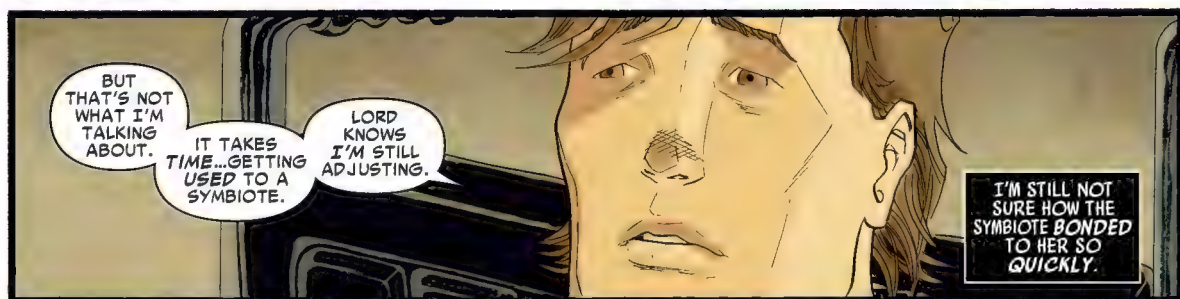
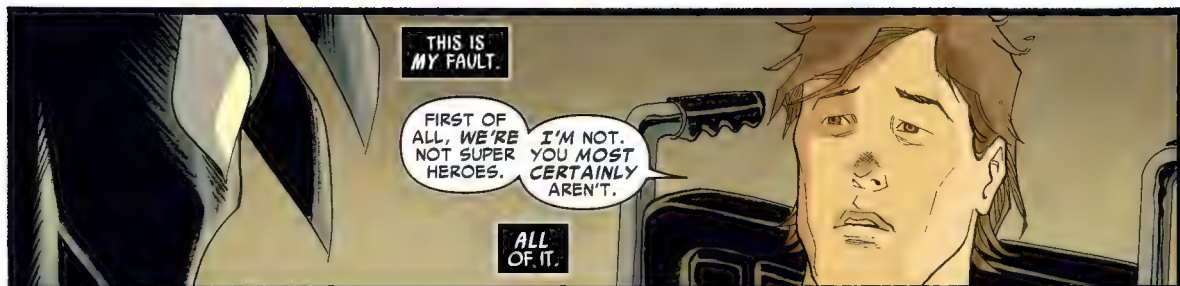
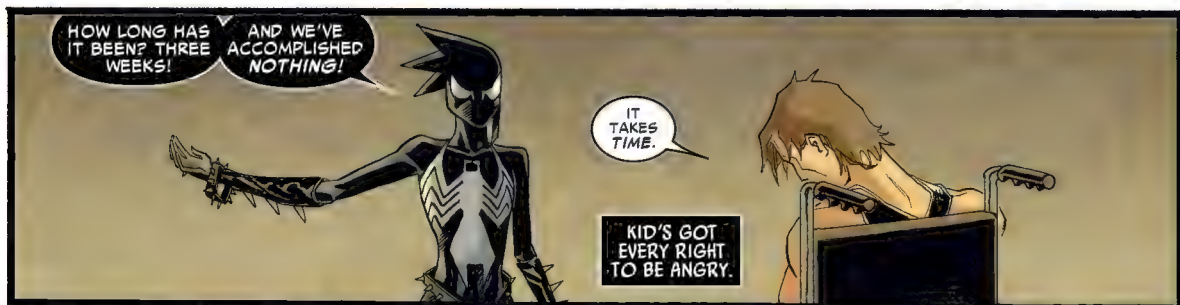
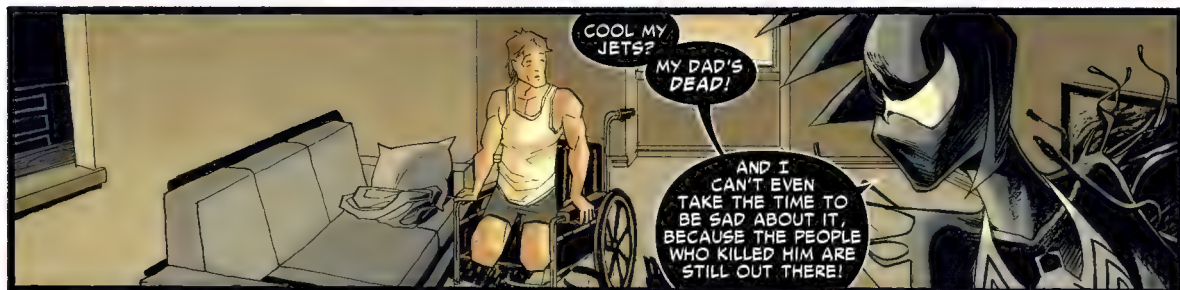
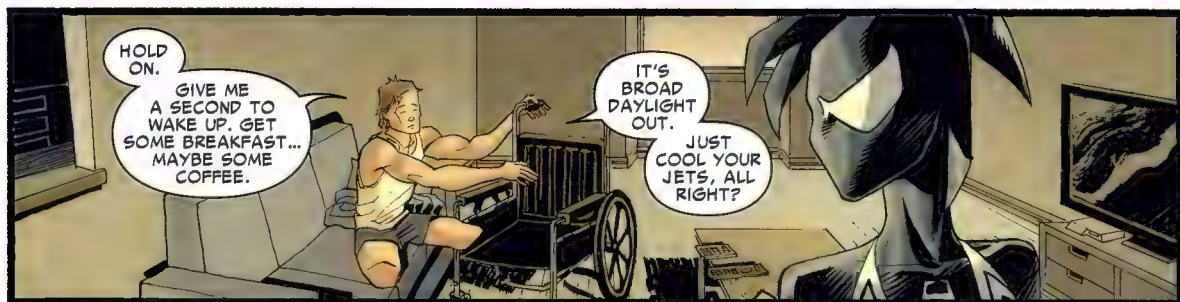
WHU--

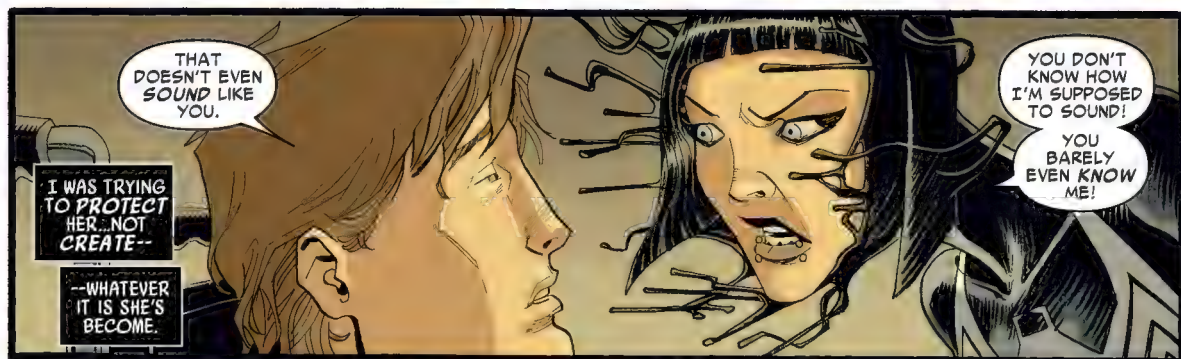
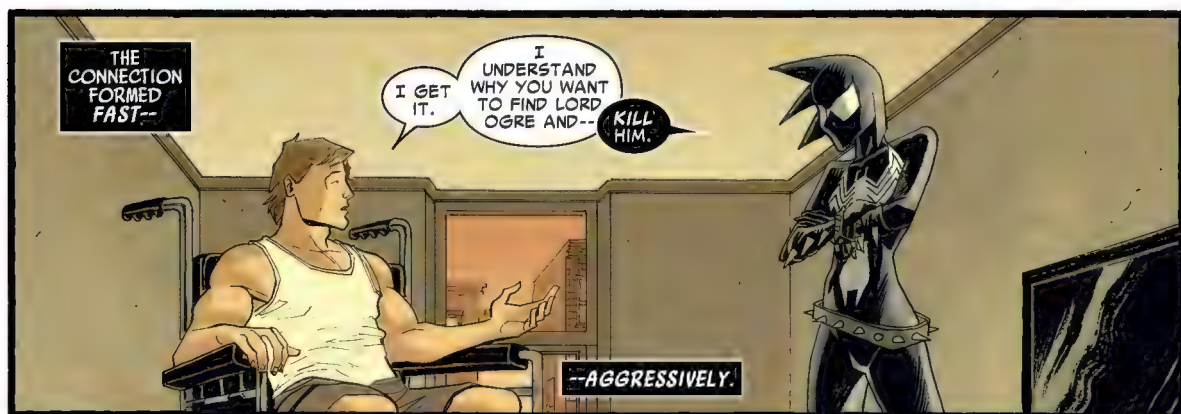


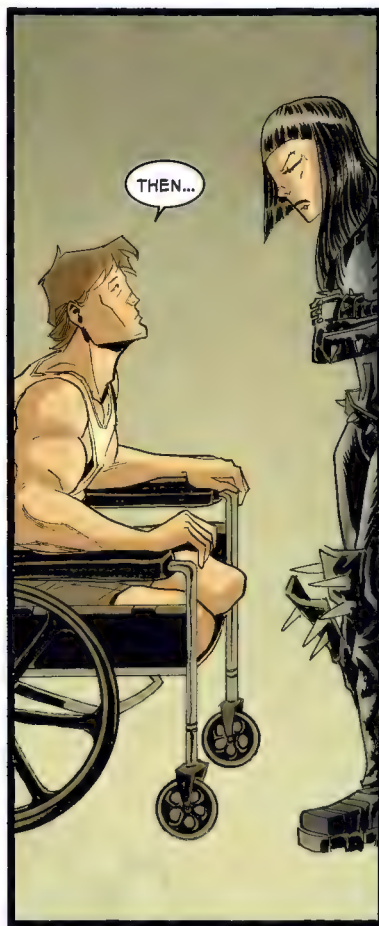
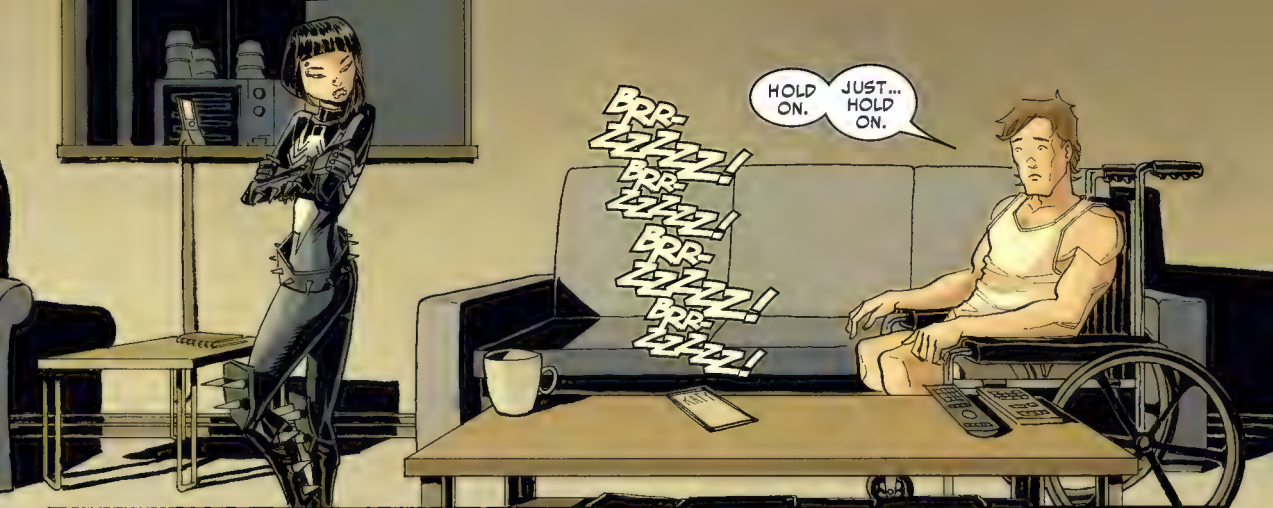
WHU--

Philadelphia.









"...WE'LL TAKE
LORD OGRE DOWN
ONCE AND FOR ALL.

"TOGETHER."

Austin, Texas.

KATY KIERNAN IS A FREELANCE
REPORTER SPECIALIZING IN
THE WEIRD AND BIZARRE.

THAT MEANS FREAKS
LIKE ME ARE HER
BREAD AND BUTTER.

THIS
BETTER BE
IMPORTANT.

WE HAVE AN
UNDERSTANDING.

MEANING SHE TAKES GREAT
DELIGHT IN SHOWING ME THINGS
THAT SIMPLY RUIN MY DAY.

AGENT
VENOM?

THAT'S AN
INTERESTING
LOOK FOR
YOU.

IT'S A
DISGUISE.

NO
KIDDING.

CAN WE
GET ON
WITH THIS,
PLEASE?

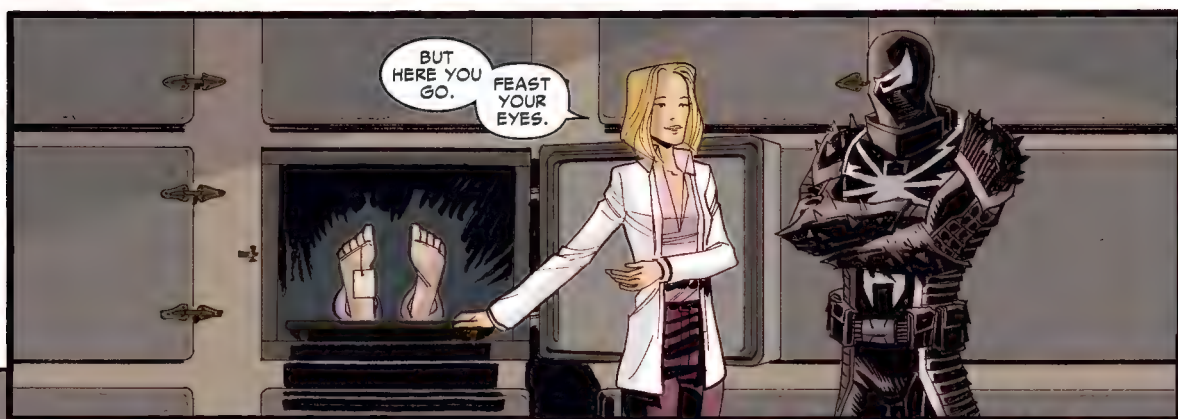
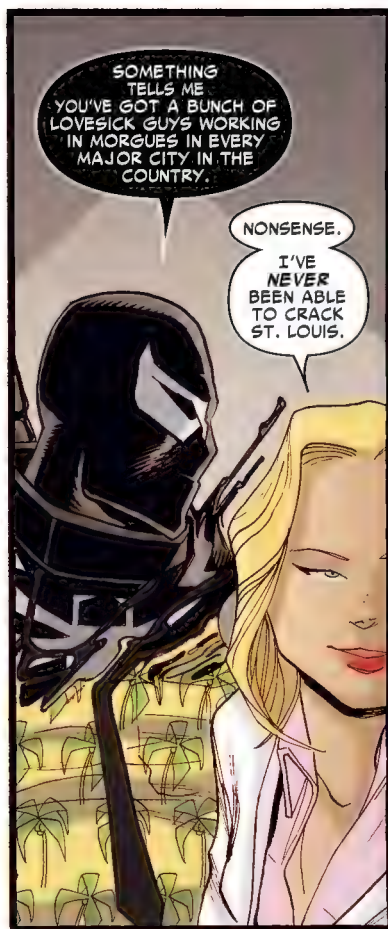
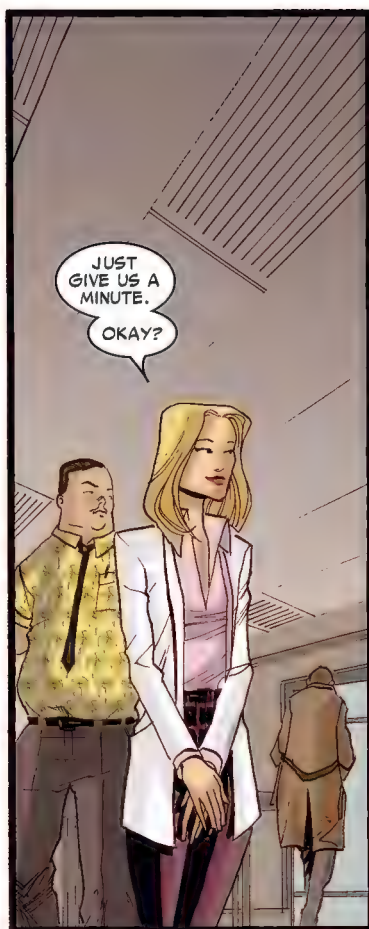
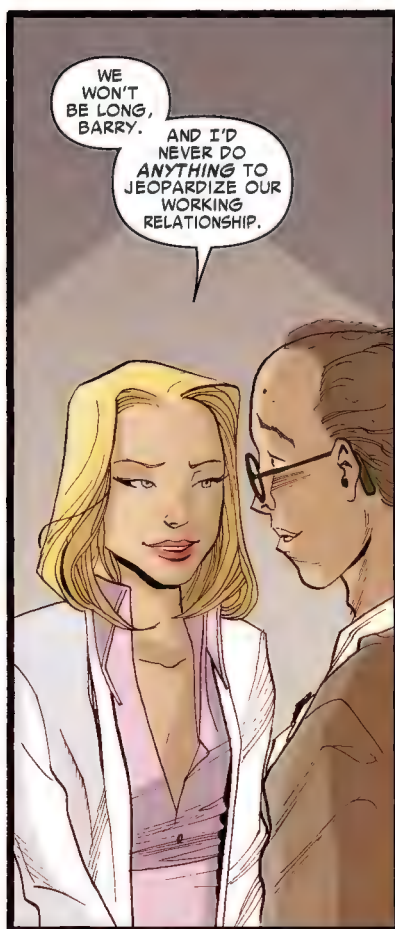
I'VE GOT
A CITY TO
PROTECT, AND
I'M A LONG WAY
FROM HOME.

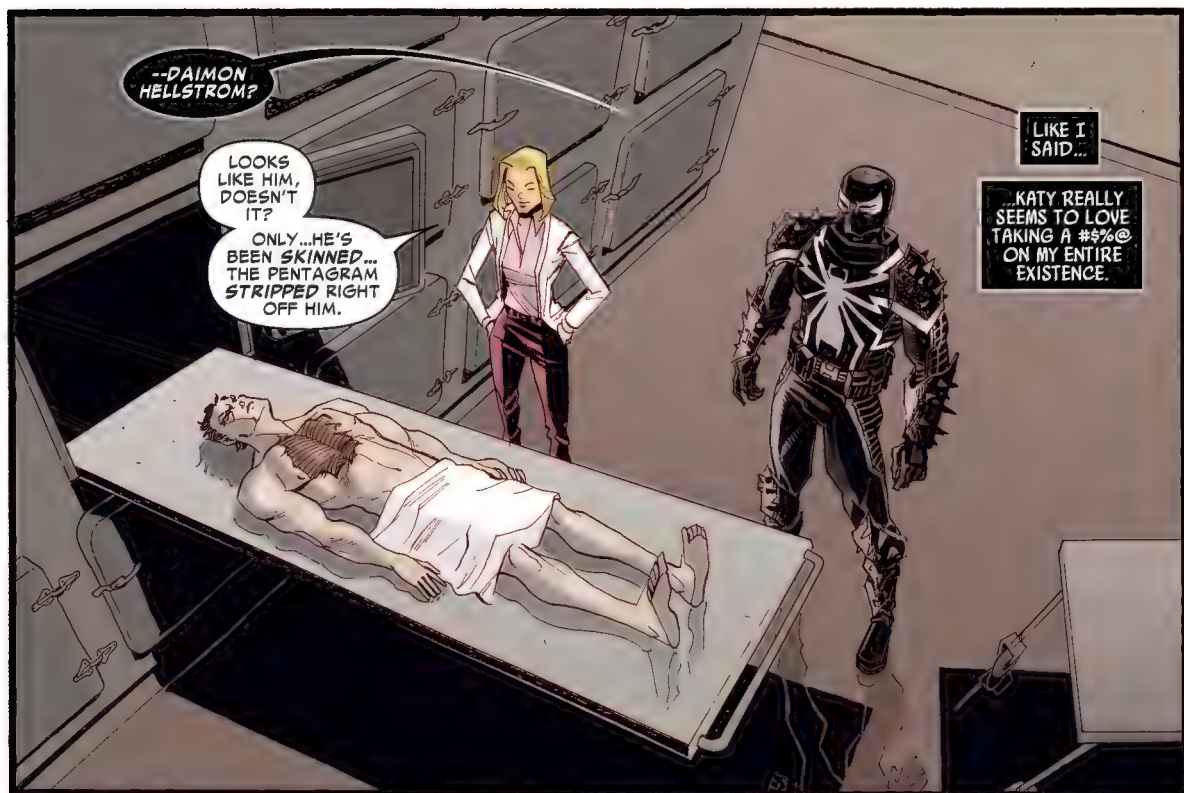
DON'T GET
YOUR GOOEY
PARTS IN A
BUNCH.

I WOULDN'T
BRING YOU ALL
THIS WAY FOR
NOTHING.

KATY...
AH...
LOOK...

I COULD
GET IN A
LOT OF--





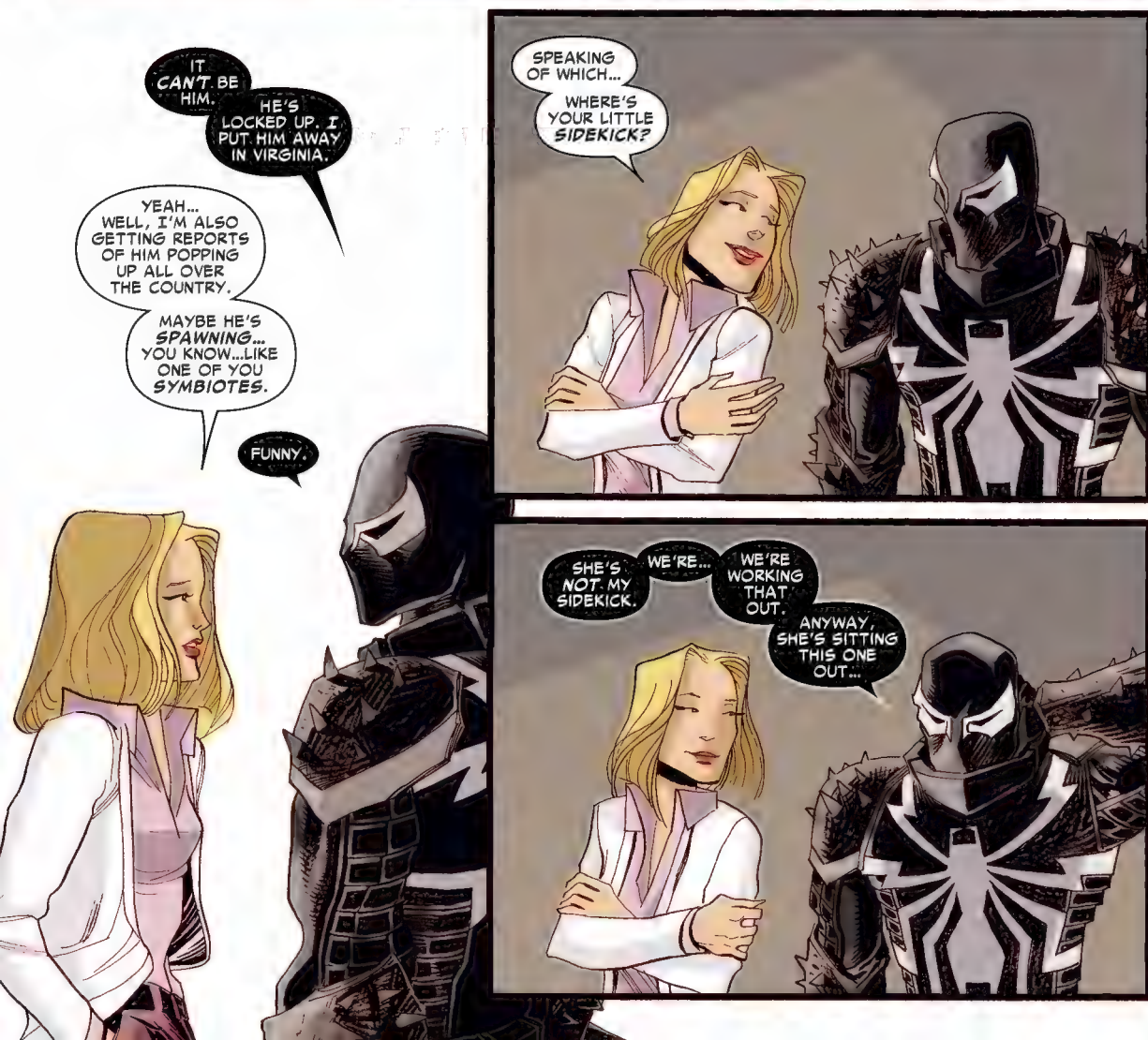
--DAIMON
HELLSTROM?

LOOKS
LIKE HIM,
DOESN'T
IT?

ONLY...HE'S
BEEN *SKINNED*...
THE PENTAGRAM
STRIPPED RIGHT
OFF HIM.

LIKE I
SAID...

...KATY REALLY
SEEMS TO LOVE
TAKING A #\$\$%
ON MY ENTIRE
EXISTENCE.



IT
CAN'T BE
HIM.

HE'S
LOCKED UP. I
PUT HIM AWAY
IN VIRGINIA.

YEAH...
WELL, I'M ALSO
GETTING REPORTS
OF HIM POPPING
UP ALL OVER THE
COUNTRY.

MAYBE HE'S
SPAWNING...
YOU KNOW...LIKE
ONE OF YOU
SYMBIOTES.

FUNNY.

SPEAKING
OF WHICH...

WHERE'S
YOUR LITTLE
SIDEKICK?

SHE'S
NOT MY
SIDEKICK.

WE'RE...

WE'RE
WORKING
THAT
OUT.

ANYWAY,
SHE'S SITTING
THIS ONE
OUT...

Panel 1: A large, multi-panel comic strip showing a chaotic scene inside a bar. A large, multi-eyed, tentacle-like creature (Venom) is in the air, attacking patrons. The patrons are running and shouting. The bar is filled with bottles and glasses. The scene is lit with red and blue lights.

Panel 2: A smaller panel showing a man (Duke) running away from the creature. The creature is on the ground, reaching out with its tentacles. The man is shouting, "YOU VERMIN COULDN'T BE SO LUCKY." The creature is responding, "THE DEVIL HERSELF HAS COME FOR YOU." and "YOU ONLY WISH I WAS VENOM."

Panel 3: A large panel showing the creature back in the air, attacking the bar again. The patrons are running and shouting. The bar is filled with bottles and glasses. The scene is lit with red and blue lights. A large speech bubble in the bottom right corner says "--MANIA!"

Panel 1 Dialogue:

- "...LAYING LOW IN PHILLY."
- GET BACK! GET BACK!
- MOVE!
- OUT OF THE WAY!
- IT'S HIM!
- IT'S VENOM!

Panel 2 Dialogue:

- YOU VERMIN COULDN'T BE SO LUCKY.
- THE DEVIL HERSELF HAS COME FOR YOU.
- YOU ONLY WISH I WAS VENOM.

Panel 3 Dialogue:

- BUT ME...
- YOU CAN CALL ME--
- MANIA!

"...LAYING LOW IN PHILLY."

GET BACK! GET BACK!

MOVE!

OUT OF THE WAY!

IT'S HIM!

IT'S VENOM!

YOU VERMIN COULDN'T BE SO LUCKY.

THE DEVIL HERSELF HAS COME FOR YOU.

YOU ONLY WISH I WAS VENOM.

BUT ME... YOU CAN CALL ME--

--MANIA!

Panel 1: A large, multi-panel comic strip showing a chaotic scene inside a bar. A large, multi-eyed, tentacle-like creature (Venom) is suspended in the air, surrounded by patrons. The creature has a central face with a wide, toothy grin and multiple eyes. It is surrounded by several people, some of whom are running or shouting. The bar has a high ceiling with a grid of lights. The overall tone is dark and intense.

Panel 2: A smaller panel showing a man in a suit (Duke) running through the bar, looking back over his shoulder. He is being pursued by the creature. The creature is on the ground, reaching out with its tentacles. The man is shouting, "YOU VERMIN COULDN'T BE SO LUCKY." The creature is responding, "THE DEVIL HERSELF HAS COME FOR YOU." and "YOU ONLY WISH I WAS VENOM."

Panel 3: A large panel showing the creature in the air again, surrounded by a group of men. The creature is attacking them with its tentacles. The men are shouting, "BUT ME..." and "YOU CAN CALL ME--". The creature is responding, "--MANIA!"

Panel 1: A large, multi-panel comic strip showing a chaotic scene inside a bar. A large, multi-eyed, tentacle-like creature (Venom) is in the air, attacking patrons. The bar is filled with people, some of whom are running or fighting. The creature has a large, multi-eyed head and many tentacles. The bar has a high ceiling with a grid pattern. The scene is lit with red and blue lights.

Panel 2: A smaller panel showing a man (Duke) running towards the creature. The creature is on the ground, and the man is holding a gun. The man is wearing a brown jacket and a hat. The creature is on the ground, and the man is holding a gun. The man is wearing a brown jacket and a hat. The creature is on the ground, and the man is holding a gun.

Panel 3: A large panel showing the creature back in the air, attacking the bar. The creature is in the air, and the bar is filled with people. The creature has a large, multi-eyed head and many tentacles. The bar has a high ceiling with a grid pattern. The scene is lit with red and blue lights.

Panel 1 Dialogue:

- "...LAYING LOW IN PHILLY."
- GET BACK! GET BACK!
- MOVE!
- OUT OF THE WAY!
- IT'S HIM!
- IT'S VENOM!

Panel 2 Dialogue:

- YOU VERMIN COULDN'T BE SO LUCKY.
- THE DEVIL HERSELF HAS COME FOR YOU.
- YOU ONLY WISH I WAS VENOM.

Panel 3 Dialogue:

- BUT ME...
- YOU CAN CALL ME--
- MANIA!

"...LAYING LOW IN PHILLY."

GET BACK! GET BACK!

MOVE!

OUT OF THE WAY!

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THE DEVIL HERSELF HAS COME FOR YOU.

YOU ONLY WISH I WAS VENOM.

BUT ME... YOU CAN CALL ME--

--MANIA!

"...LAYING LOW IN PHILLY."

GET BACK! GET BACK!

MOVE!

OUT OF THE WAY!

IT'S HIM!

IT'S VENOM!

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THE DEVIL HERSELF HAS COME FOR YOU.

YOU ONLY WISH I WAS VENOM.

BUT ME... YOU CAN CALL ME--

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"...LAYING LOW IN PHILLY."

GET BACK! GET BACK!

MOVE!

OUT OF THE WAY!

IT'S HIM!

IT'S VENOM!

YOU VERMIN COULDN'T BE SO LUCKY.

THE DEVIL HERSELF HAS COME FOR YOU.

YOU ONLY WISH I WAS VENOM.

BUT ME... YOU CAN CALL ME--

--MANIA!

Panel 1: A large, multi-panel comic strip showing a chaotic scene inside a bar. A large, multi-eyed, tentacle-like creature (Venom) is suspended in the air, surrounded by patrons. The creature has a large, multi-eyed, tentacle-like head and a body with multiple limbs. It is surrounded by patrons who are reacting in shock and fear. The bar is filled with patrons, some of whom are holding weapons. The scene is lit with red and blue lights, creating a dramatic atmosphere.

Panel 2: A smaller panel showing a man (Duke) running towards the creature. The creature is on the ground, and the man is holding a weapon. The man is wearing a red shirt and a black vest. The creature is on the ground, and the man is holding a weapon. The man is wearing a red shirt and a black vest. The creature is on the ground, and the man is holding a weapon.

Panel 3: A smaller panel showing the creature attacking a group of men. The creature is on the ground, and the men are holding weapons. The creature is on the ground, and the men are holding weapons. The creature is on the ground, and the men are holding weapons.

Panel 1: A large, multi-panel comic strip showing a chaotic scene inside a bar. A large, multi-eyed, tentacle-like creature (Venom) is in the air, attacking patrons. The bar is filled with people, some of whom are running or fighting back. The scene is lit with red and blue lights, creating a dramatic atmosphere.

Panel 2: A smaller panel showing a close-up of the creature's face as it attacks a man. The man is screaming, and the creature is roaring. The scene is filled with action and tension.

Panel 3: A smaller panel showing the creature in the air, attacking the bar again. The bar is filled with people, some of whom are running or fighting back. The scene is lit with red and blue lights, creating a dramatic atmosphere.

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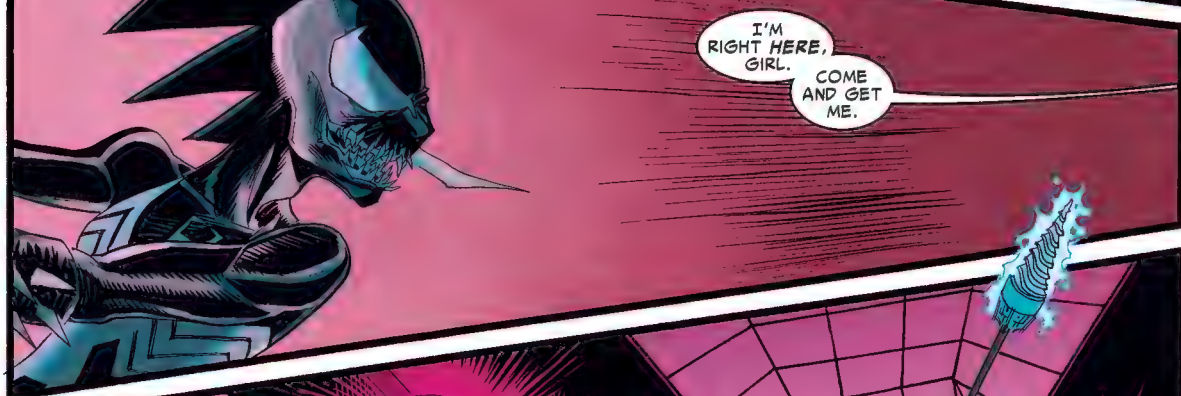
- "...LAYING LOW IN PHILLY."
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Panel 2 Dialogue:

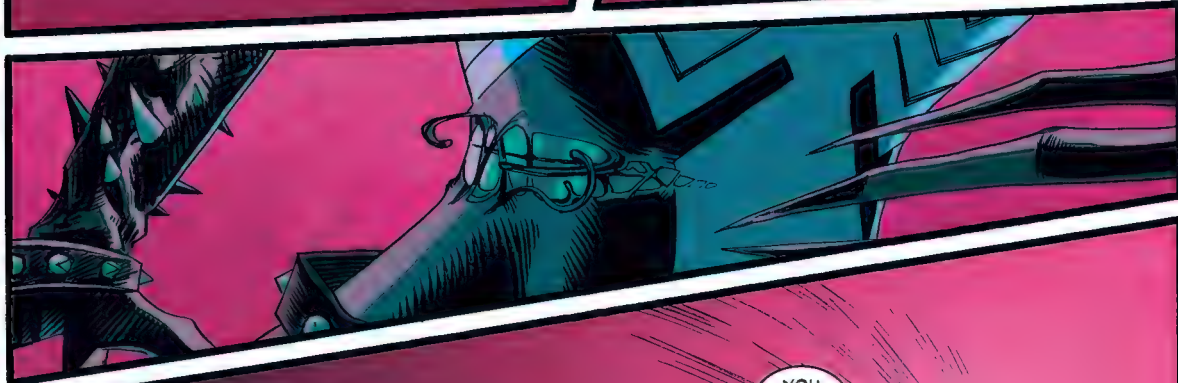
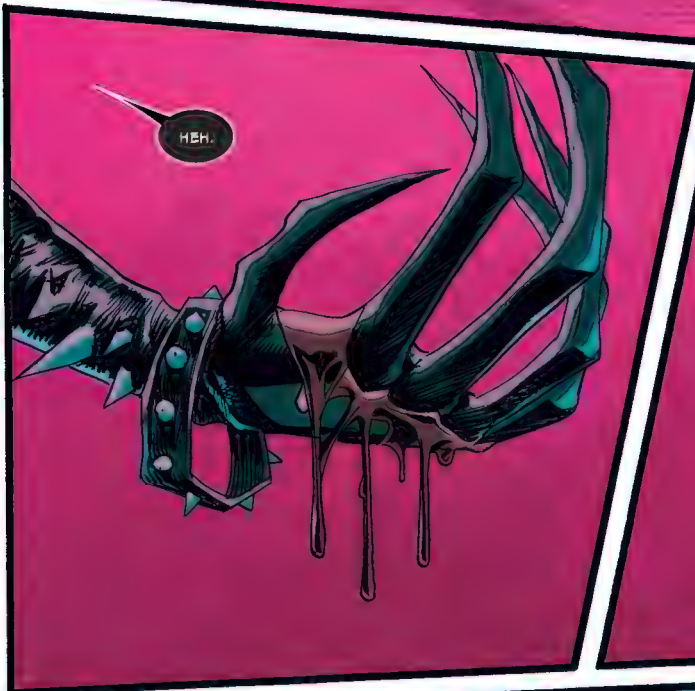
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- THE DEVIL HERSELF HAS COME FOR YOU.
- YOU ONLY WISH I WAS VENOM.

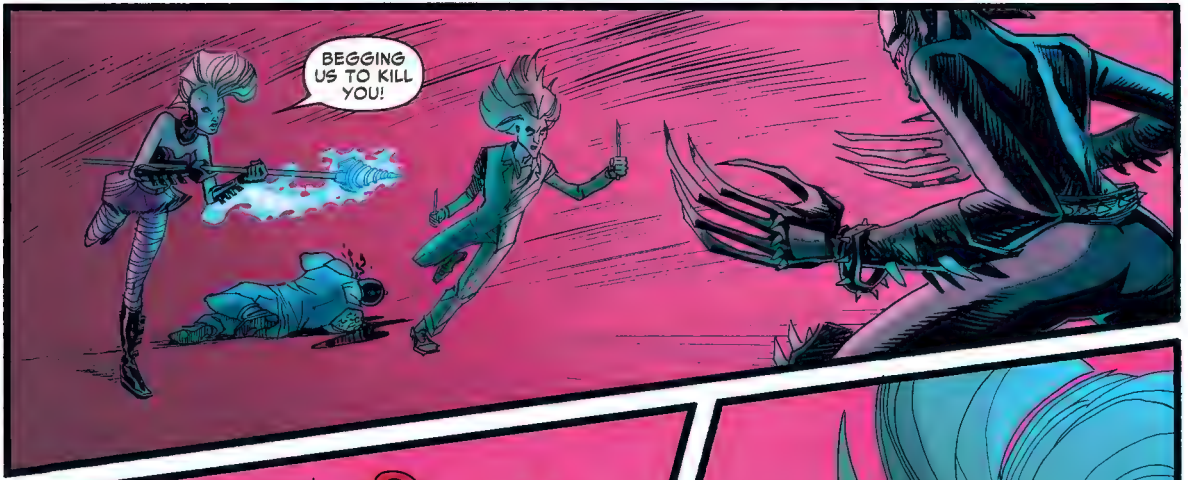
Panel 3 Dialogue:

- BUT ME...
- YOU CAN CALL ME--
- MANIA!



Sssssss!







The Peak Maximum Security Prison.

VIRGINIA.

"THERE'S SOMETHING DIFFERENT ABOUT YOU, OFFICER COLLINS."

DAIMON HELLSTROM.

THE SON OF SATAN.

NEW AFTER-SHAVE?

TRIED TO RAM A DEMON RIGHT DOWN MY THROAT AND INTO MY SOUL.

CUT THE CRAP. YOU KNOW IT'S ME.

AH, YES. AGENT VENOM.

I SUPPOSE IT'S DIFFICULT FOR YOU TO GET AN APPOINTMENT AFTER YOUR LAST LITTLE OUTBURST.

I HATE THIS GUY.

EVEN HERE...AFTER I'VE BEEN MOVED TO THESE NEW LUXURY ACCOMMODATIONS...I DOUBT ANYONE WANTS THE REAL YOU LURKING ABOUT.

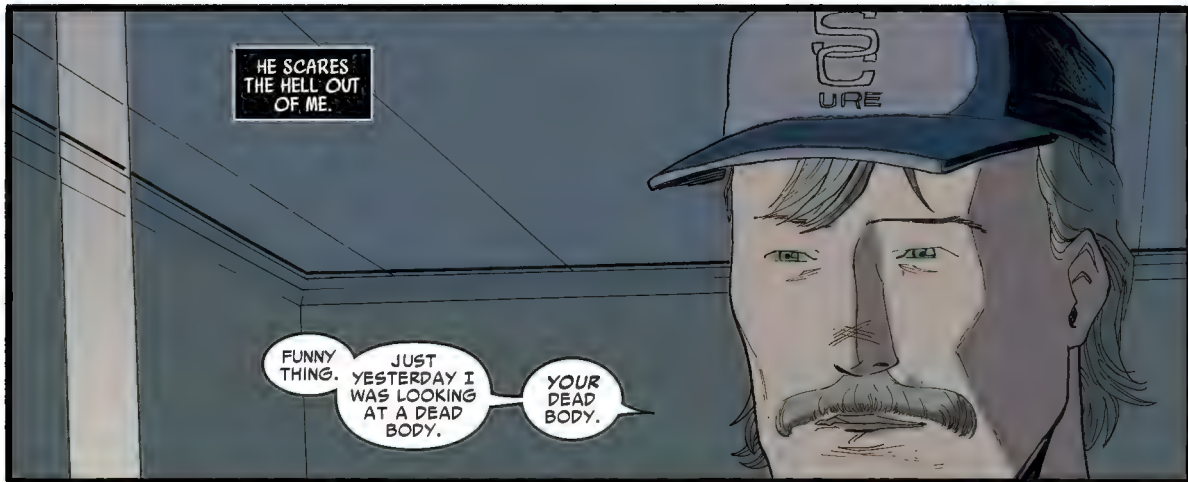
I CERTAINLY HOPE YOU HAVEN'T EATEN POOR COLLINS' BRAIN.

I LIKED COLLINS.

FORGET THE DEMON... FORGET THAT SMARMY SMILE THAT MAKES ME WANT TO BUST HIS TEETH IN.

WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU, AGENT?

THE THING THAT REALLY MAKES ME LOATHE THIS GUY?



HE SCARES
THE HELL OUT
OF ME.

FUNNY
THING.

JUST
YESTERDAY I
WAS LOOKING
AT A DEAD
BODY.

YOUR
DEAD
BODY.



HMM.

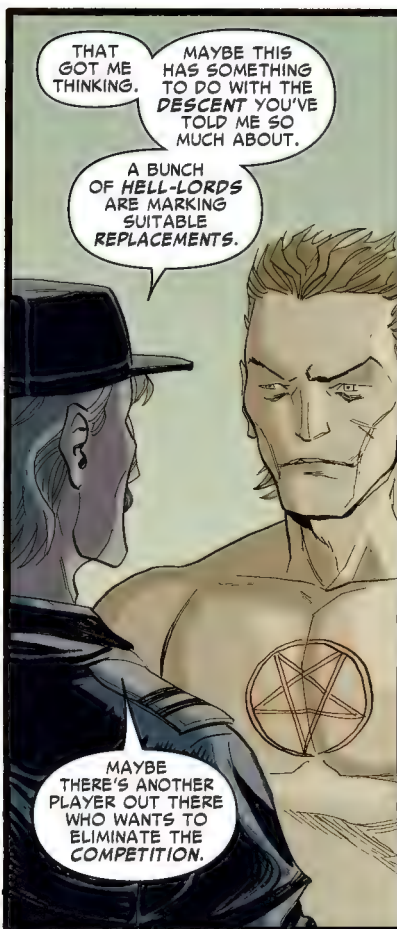
THAT'S
DISCONCERTING.



WHEN IT
COMES TO
MAGIC, THERE'S
A LOT I DON'T
UNDERSTAND.

BUT THIS
MAN...YOU...
WHOEVER HE WAS...
HE WAS
SKINNED.

HIS
MURDERER
RIPPED THAT
PENTAGRAM
RIGHT OFF
HIM.



THAT
GOT ME
THINKING.

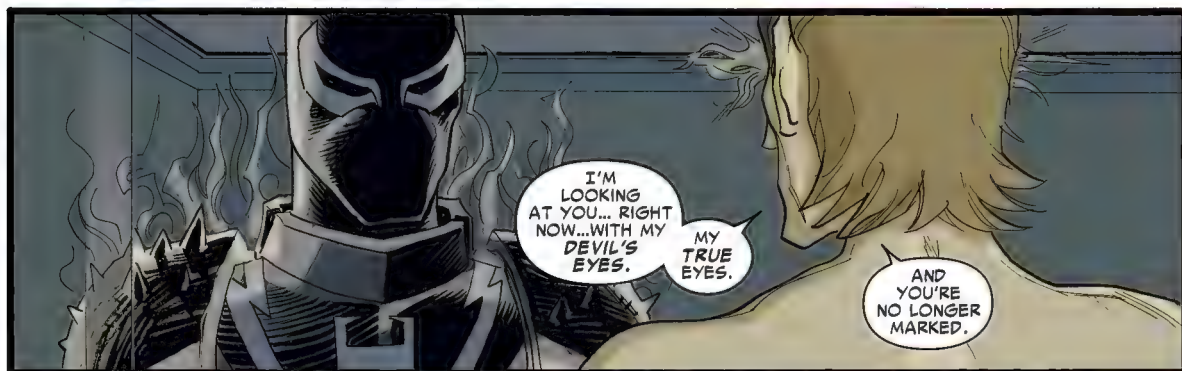
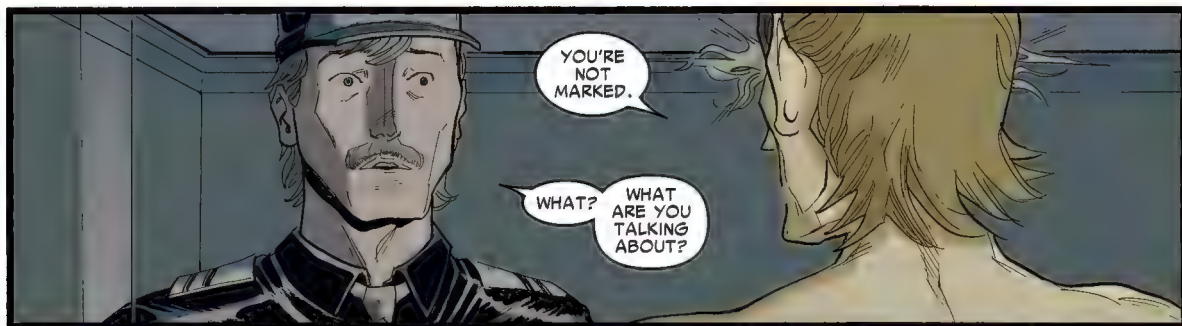
MAYBE THIS
HAS SOMETHING
TO DO WITH THE
DESCENT YOU'VE
TOLD ME SO
MUCH ABOUT.

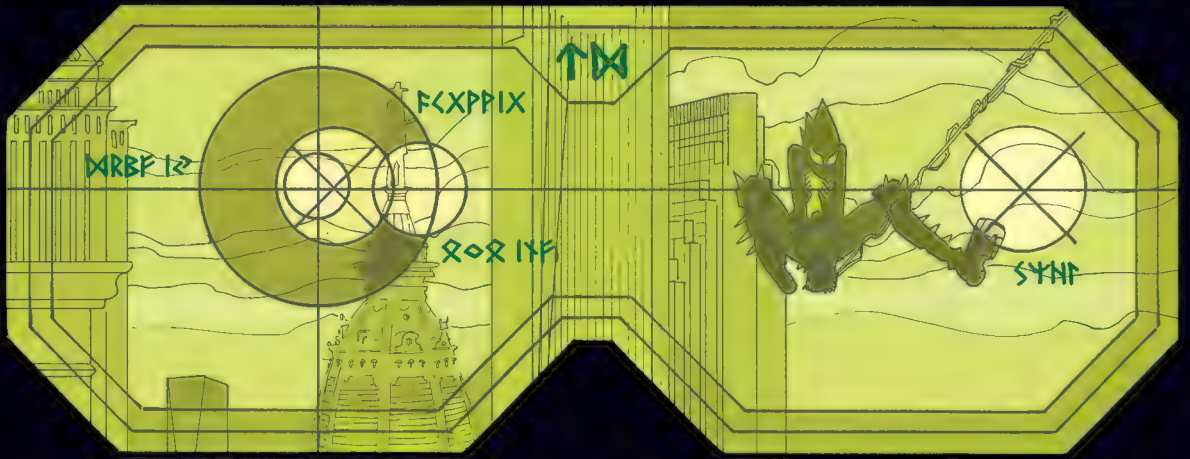
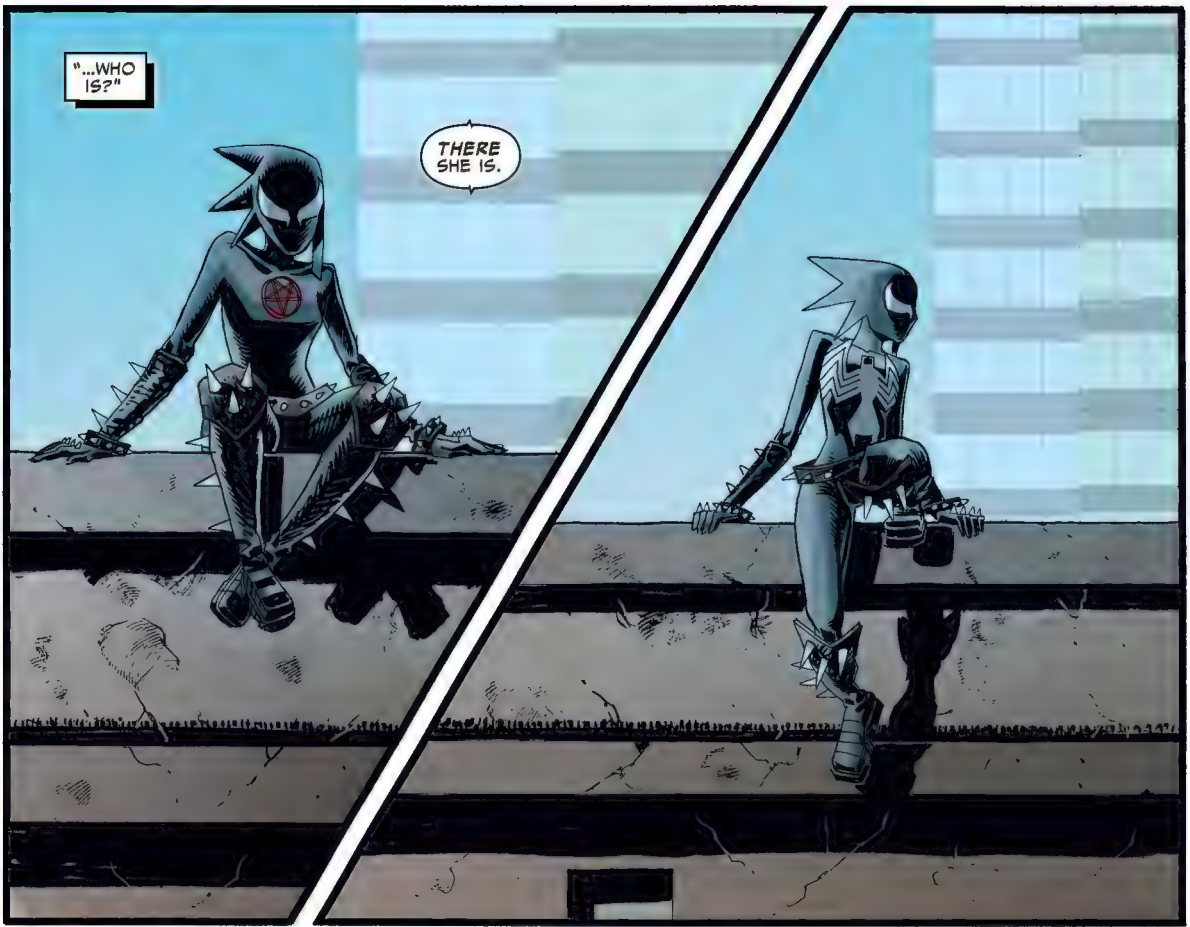
A BUNCH
OF HELL-LORDS
ARE MARKING
SUITABLE
REPLACEMENTS.

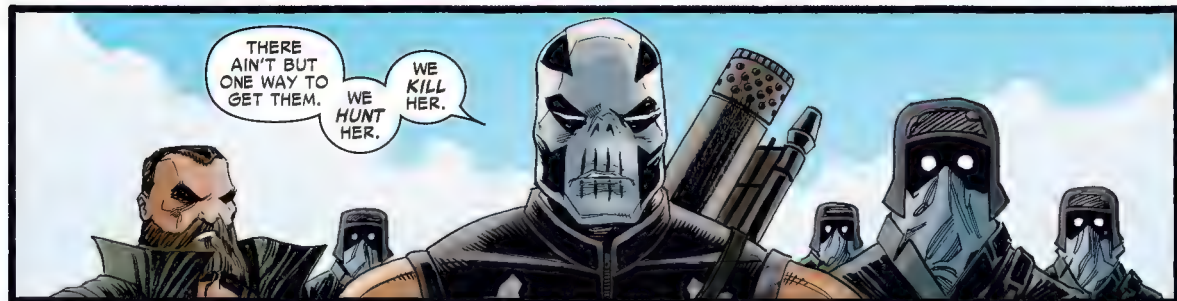
MAYBE
THERE'S ANOTHER
PLAYER OUT THERE
WHO WANTS TO
ELIMINATE THE
COMPETITION.



AND
MAYBE YOUR
EVIL, EVIL TWIN
WAS JUST
ANOTHER
VICTIM.







"AND WE SKIN HER."



SYMBIOWROTE

SANA AMANAT
EDITOR

STEPHEN WACKER
SENIOR EDITOR

AXEL ALONSO
EDITOR IN CHIEF

JOE QUESADA
CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER

DAN BUCKLEY
PUBLISHER

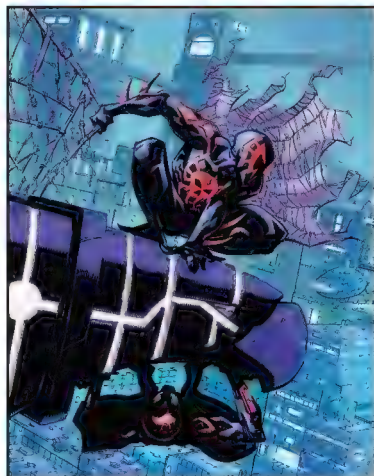
ALAN FINE
EXEC. PRODUCER

Send e-mail to SPIDEYOFFICE@MARVEL.COM
(please mark as OKAY TO PRINT)

NEXT!



ALSO ON SALE:



SUPERIOR SPIDER-MAN #17



DAREDEVIL: DARK NIGHTS #4



**SUPERIOR FOES OF
SPIDER-MAN #3**

VENOM



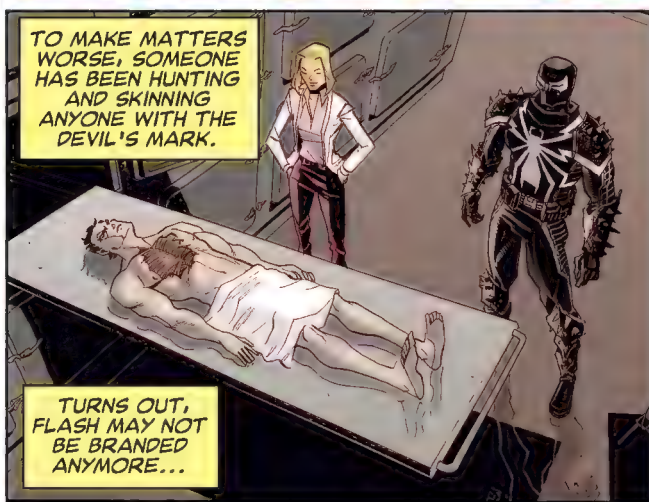
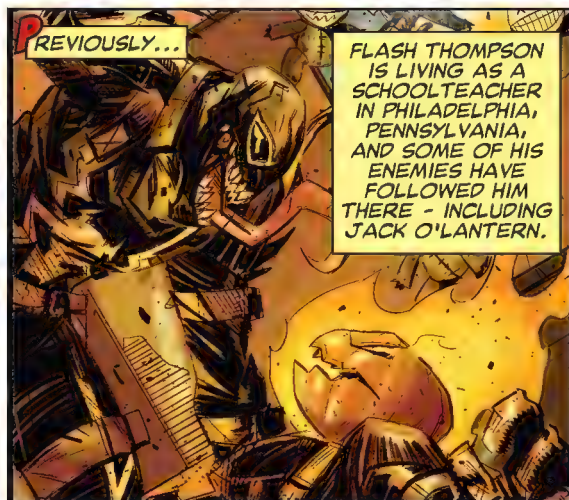
MARVEL

**BUNN
COELHO
LOUGHRIDGE**

041

Eugene "Flash" Thompson was a high school bully turned war hero, inspired by the Amazing Spider-Man to get his act together. When he lost both legs in combat, his country gave him a chance to serve again, bonding him with the alien parasite suit that grants its host powers similar to Spider-Man. From that day on, he was the Secret Avenger known as...

VENOM



MANIA part 2 of 3

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writer

JORGE COELHO
artist

LEE LOUGHRIDGE
color art

VC's JOE CARAMAGNA
letters

DECLAN SHALVEY & JORDIE BELLAIRE
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SANA AMANAT
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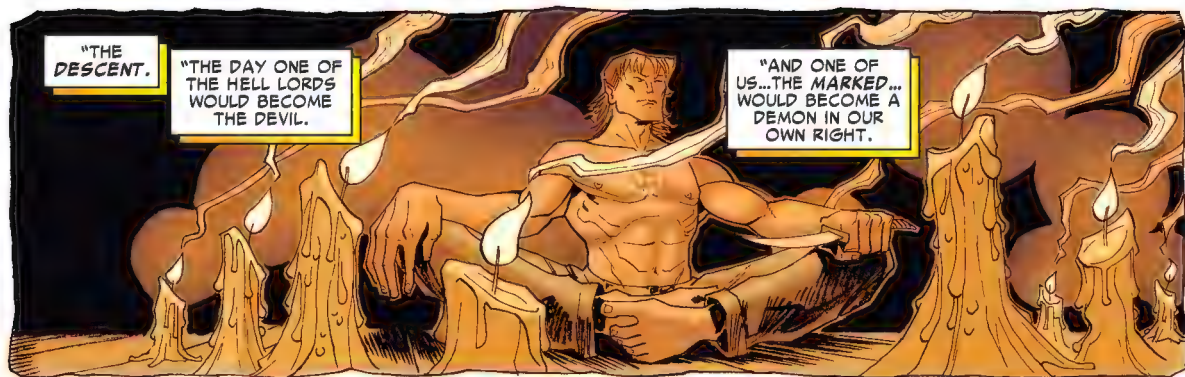
STEPHEN WACKER
senior editor

AXEL ALONSO
editor in chief

JOE QUESADA
chief creative officer

DAN BUCKLEY
publisher

ALAN FINE
exec. producer



"THE
DESCENT.

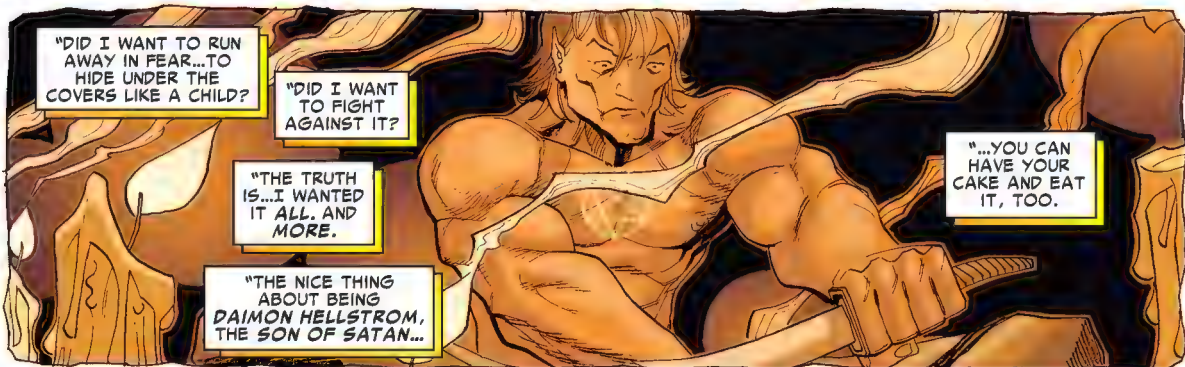
"THE DAY ONE OF
THE HELL LORDS
WOULD BECOME
THE DEVIL.

"AND ONE OF
US...THE MARKED...
WOULD BECOME A
DEMON IN OUR
OWN RIGHT.



"WHEN I FIRST
HEARD ABOUT IT, I
DIDN'T KNOW WHAT
TO BELIEVE.

"DID I WANT
THIS POWER?
THIS HONOR?



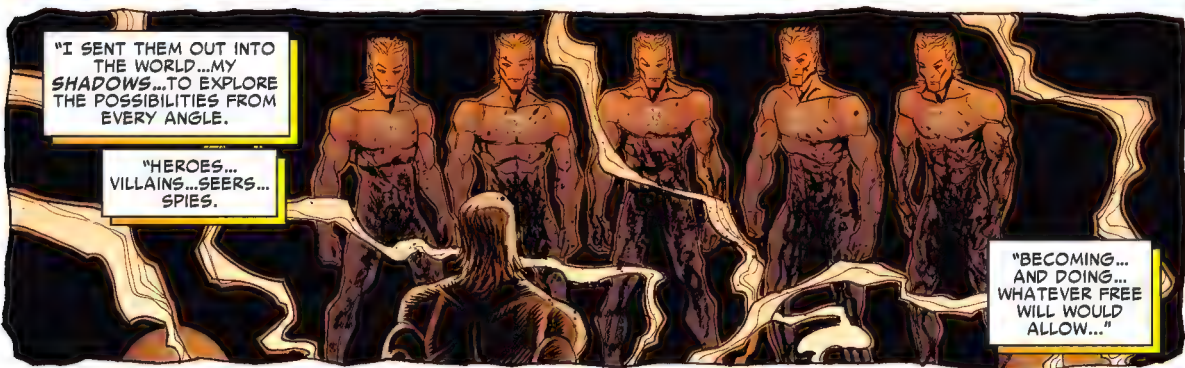
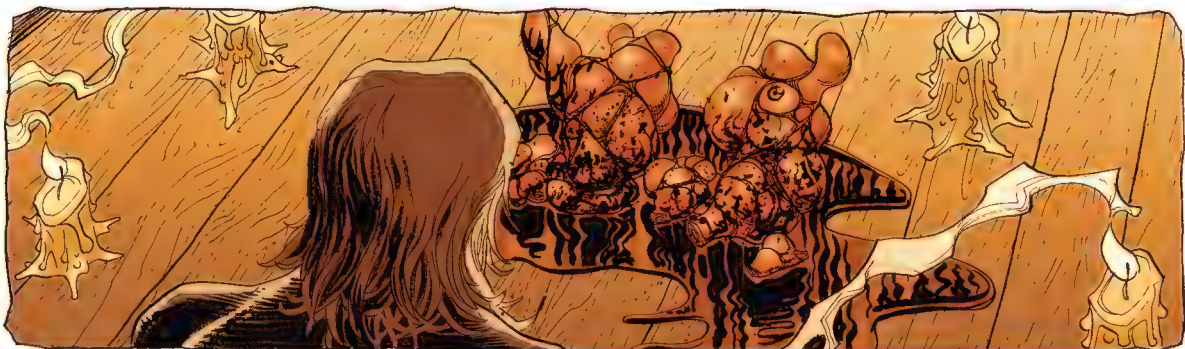
"DID I WANT TO RUN
AWAY IN FEAR...TO
HIDE UNDER THE
COVERS LIKE A CHILD?

"DID I WANT
TO FIGHT
AGAINST IT?

"THE TRUTH
IS...I WANTED
IT ALL. AND
MORE.

"THE NICE THING
ABOUT BEING
DAIMON HELLSTROM,
THE SON OF SATAN...

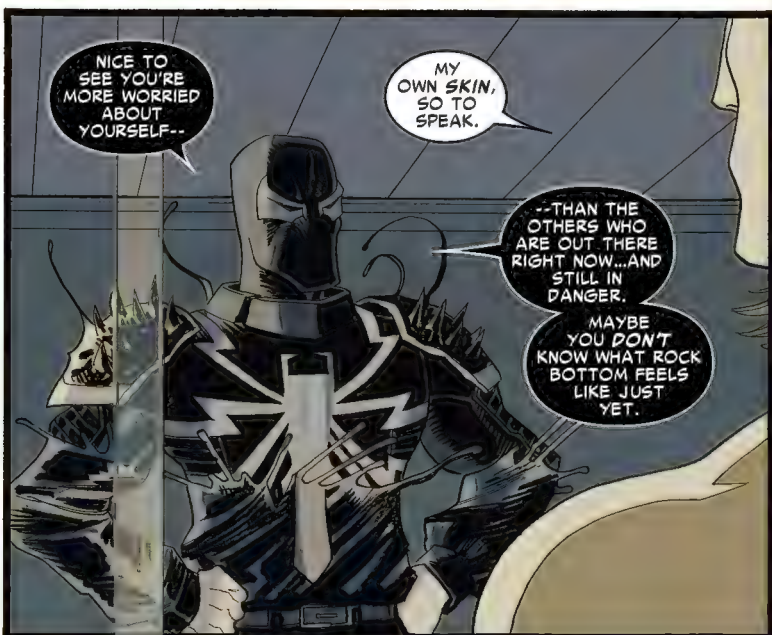
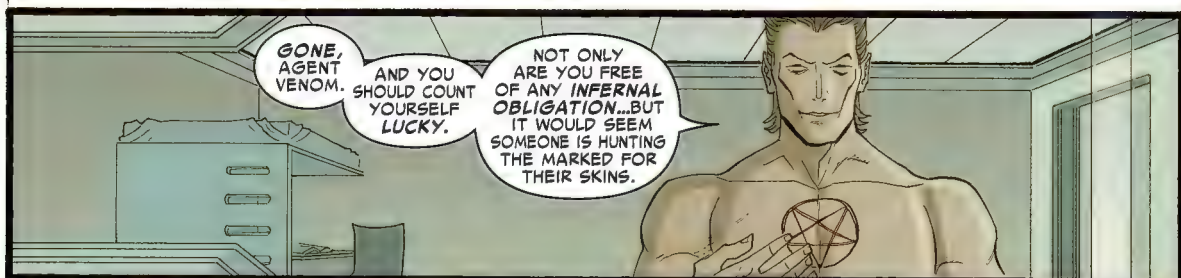
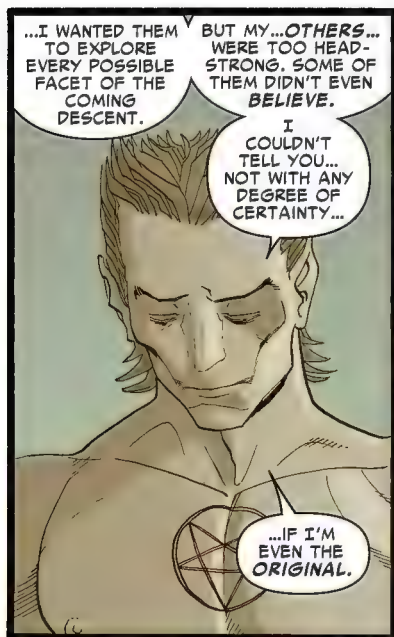
"...YOU CAN
HAVE YOUR
CAKE AND EAT
IT, TOO.

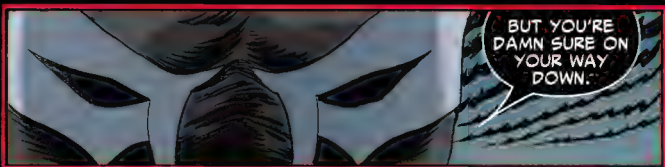


"I SENT THEM OUT INTO
THE WORLD...MY
SHADOWS...TO EXPLORE
THE POSSIBILITIES FROM
EVERY ANGLE.

"HEROES...
VILLAINS...SEERS...
SPIES.

"BECOMING...
AND DOING...
WHATEVER FREE
WILL WOULD
ALLOW..."

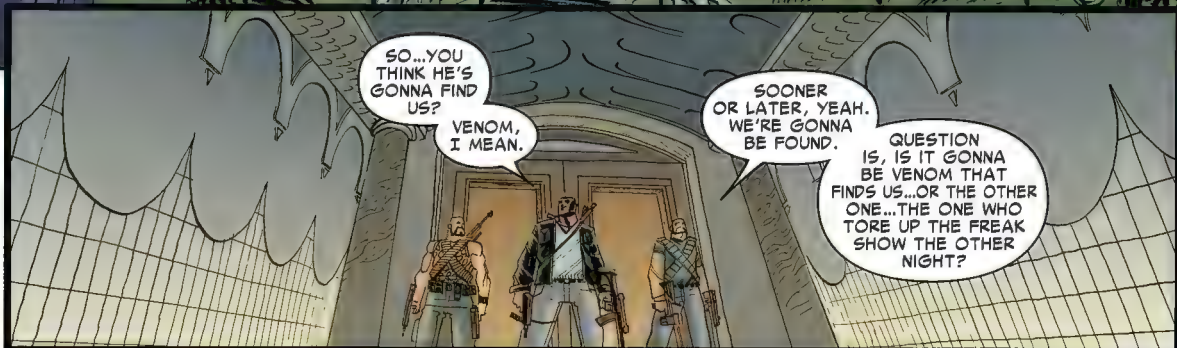




BUT YOU'RE
DAMN SURE ON
YOUR WAY
DOWN.

Philadelphia.

LORD OGRE'S
PENTHOUSE.

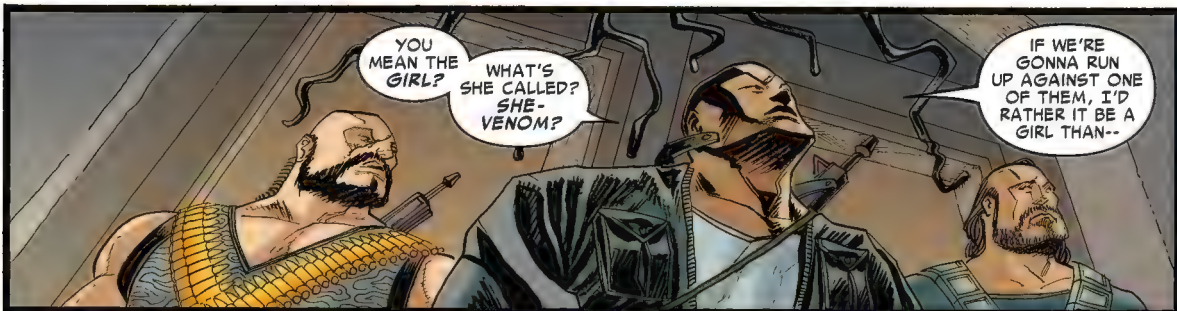


SO...YOU
THINK HE'S
GONNA FIND
US?

VENOM,
I MEAN.

SOONER
OR LATER, YEAH.
WE'RE GONNA
BE FOUND.

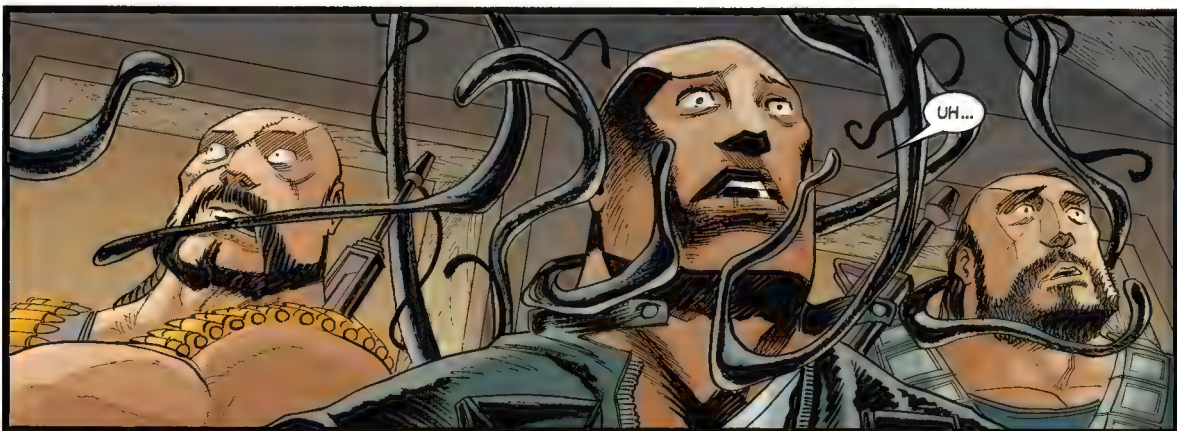
QUESTION
IS, IS IT GONNA
BE VENOM THAT
FINDS US...OR THE OTHER
ONE...THE ONE WHO
TORE UP THE FREAK
SHOW THE OTHER
NIGHT?



YOU
MEAN THE
GIRL?

WHAT'S
SHE CALLED?
SHE-
VENOM?

IF WE'RE
GONNA RUN
UP AGAINST ONE
OF THEM, I'D
RATHER IT BE A
GIRL THAN--



UH...

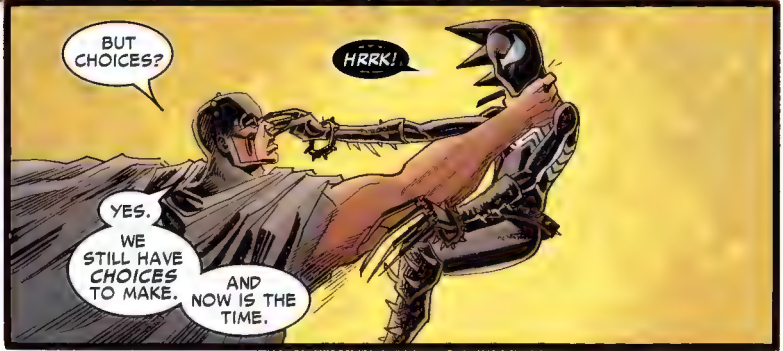




NO MORE
RUNNING,
TOUGH
GUY!



NO.
NO MORE
RUNNING...FOR
EITHER OF
US.



BUT
CHOICES?

HRRK!

YES.
WE
STILL HAVE
CHOICES
TO MAKE.
AND
NOW IS THE
TIME.

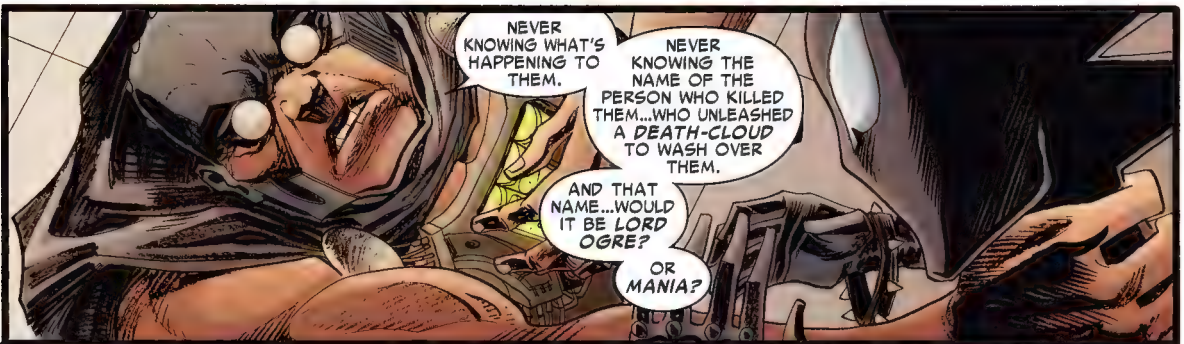


SO
EAGER TO
KILL.
NEVER
CONSIDERING
THE
CONSEQUENCES.

NEVER
CONSIDERING
THAT WHEN I DIE,
MY GOSPEL WILL
SPREAD ON THE
WIND.



SO MANY
PEOPLE...DYING...
BREATHING
THEIR LAST
BREATH.

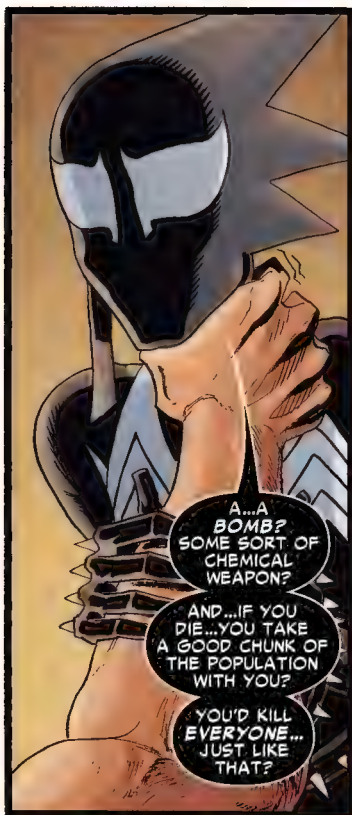


NEVER
KNOWING WHAT'S
HAPPENING TO
THEM.

NEVER
KNOWING THE
NAME OF THE
PERSON WHO KILLED
THEM...WHO UNLEASHED
A DEATH-CLOUD
TO WASH OVER
THEM.

AND THAT
NAME...WOULD
IT BE LORD
OGRE?

OR
MANIA?



A...A BOMB? SOME SORT OF CHEMICAL WEAPON?

AND...IF YOU DIE...YOU TAKE A GOOD CHUNK OF THE POPULATION WITH YOU?

YOU'D KILL EVERYONE... JUST LIKE THAT?



AMEN.



GUESS I CAN'T SIMPLY KILL YOU THEN, HUH?



THAT'S A REAL @*% MOVE. YOU KNOW THAT, RIGHT?

PLAYING THE COWARD CARD LIKE THAT...

...AND I'M STILL GONNA BOUNCE YOU ON YOUR ASS.



SEE...I'M PRETTY MUCH PROTECTED FROM CHEMICALS AND TOXIC GASES.

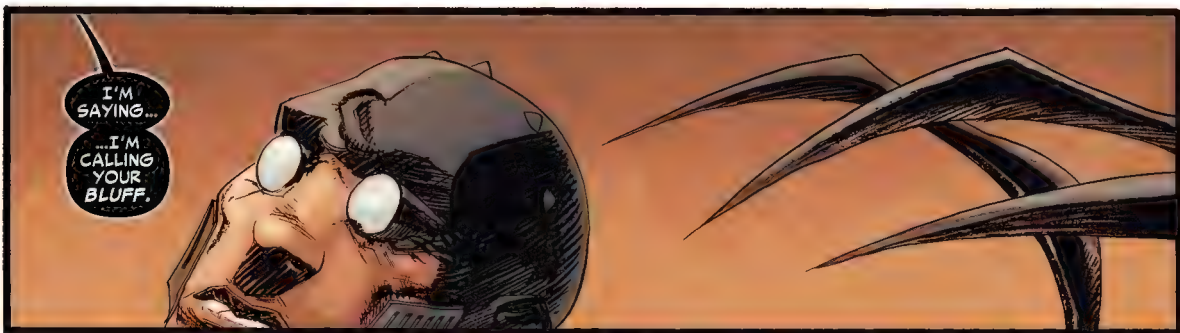
THAT'S HOW I PUT UP WITH YOUR B.O.

AND IF KILLING YOU MEANS DROPPING A BUNCH OF OTHER PEOPLE I DON'T KNOW...

...I CAN LIVE WITH IT.

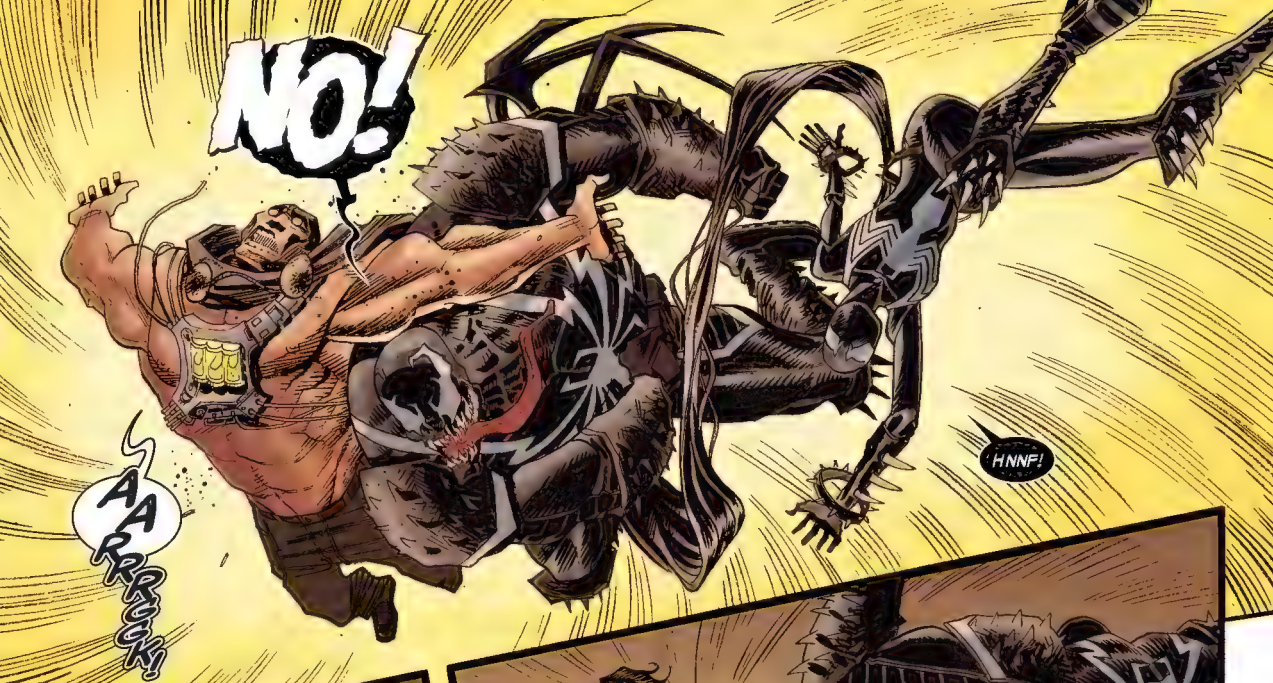
WHAT--

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?



I'M SAYING...

...I'M CALLING YOUR BLUFF.





YOU'RE IN BIG TROUBLE, YOUNG LADY.

I TOLD YOU TO STAY PUT.

WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU WERE DOING?

I WAS GETTING THE JOB DONE!

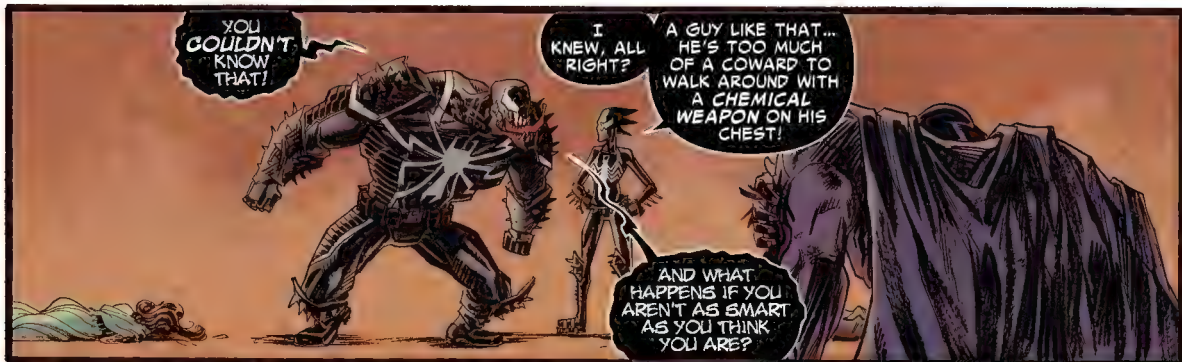


IF I HADN'T STOPPED YOU WHEN I DID...

...YOU WOULD HAVE SET OFF THAT BOMB...

...KILLED GOD KNOWS HOW MANY PEOPLE.

HE WAS BLUFFING!

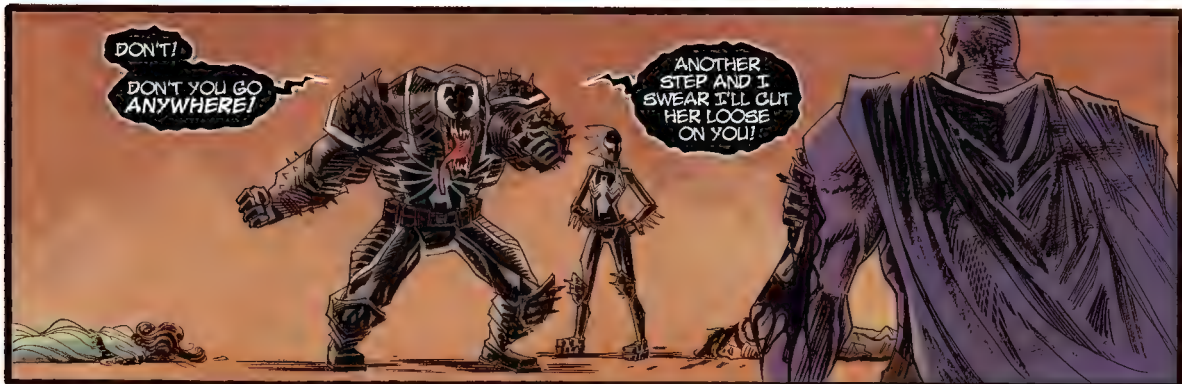


YOU COULDN'T KNOW THAT!

I KNEW, ALL RIGHT?

A GUY LIKE THAT... HE'S TOO MUCH OF A COWARD TO WALK AROUND WITH A CHEMICAL WEAPON ON HIS CHEST!

AND WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU AREN'T AS SMART AS YOU THINK YOU ARE?



DON'T!
DON'T YOU GO ANYWHERE!

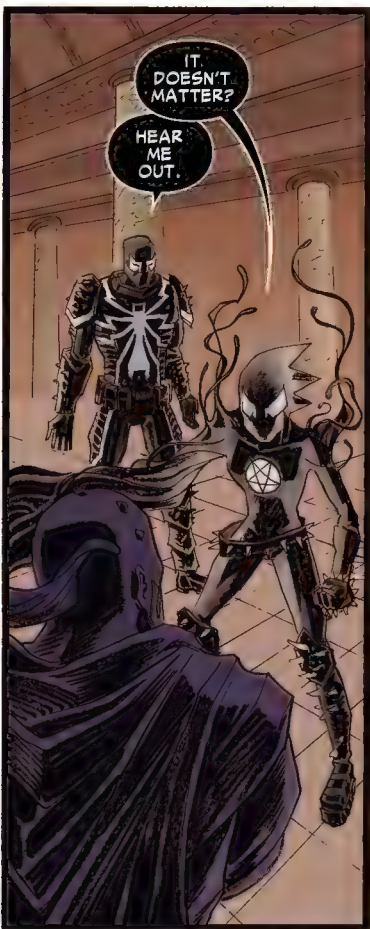
ANOTHER STEP AND I SWEAR I'LL CUT HER LOOSE ON YOU!



LOOK... I'M JUST LOOKING OUT FOR YOU.

YOU'RE NOT YOURSELF... AND IF THE SYMBIOTE WASN'T BAD ENOUGH, I THINK THERE'S SOMETHING MORE.

I DON'T MEAN TO COME DOWN ON YOU--





WHY DON'T
YOU LET ME
WORRY ABOUT
DEVIL'S MARKS
AND SUCH?

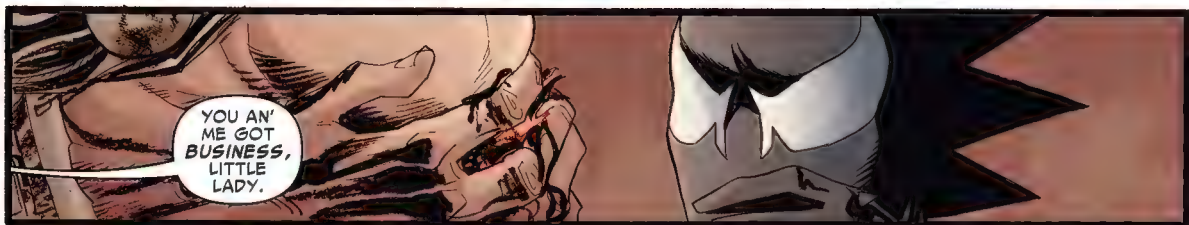
WHAT ARE
YOU?

ANOTHER
ONE OF OGRE'S
FREAKS?

MAYBE
THINKING THIS
IS YOUR CHANCE
TO TAKE HIS
PLACE?



NAME'S
CROSSBONES.



YOU AN'
ME GOT
BUSINESS,
LITTLE
LADY.



ALL
RIGHT.

MASTER
MAYHEM.

DO YOUR
THING.



LEAVE
THE MARK
INTACT.

EVERYTHING
ELSE IS
KIBBLES AND
BITS.

THAT...

...IS
ACTUALLY
GOOD
ADVICE.

OHhhh.
DADDY'S
RINGING THE
DINNER BELL.

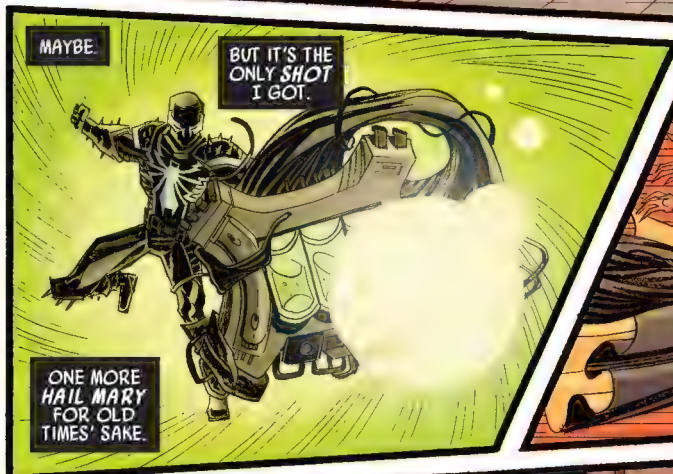
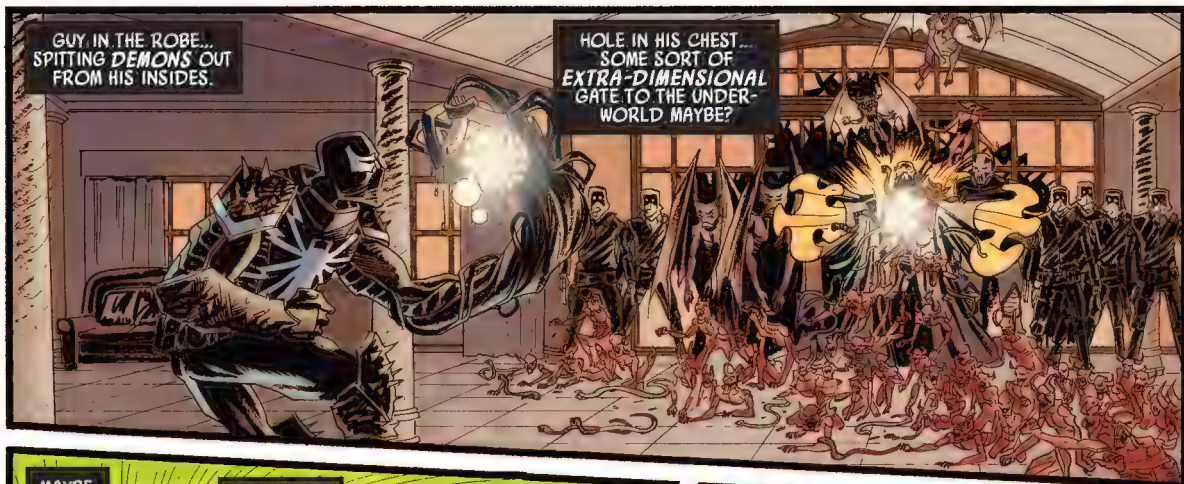
HOLD
ONTO YOUR
BUTTS.

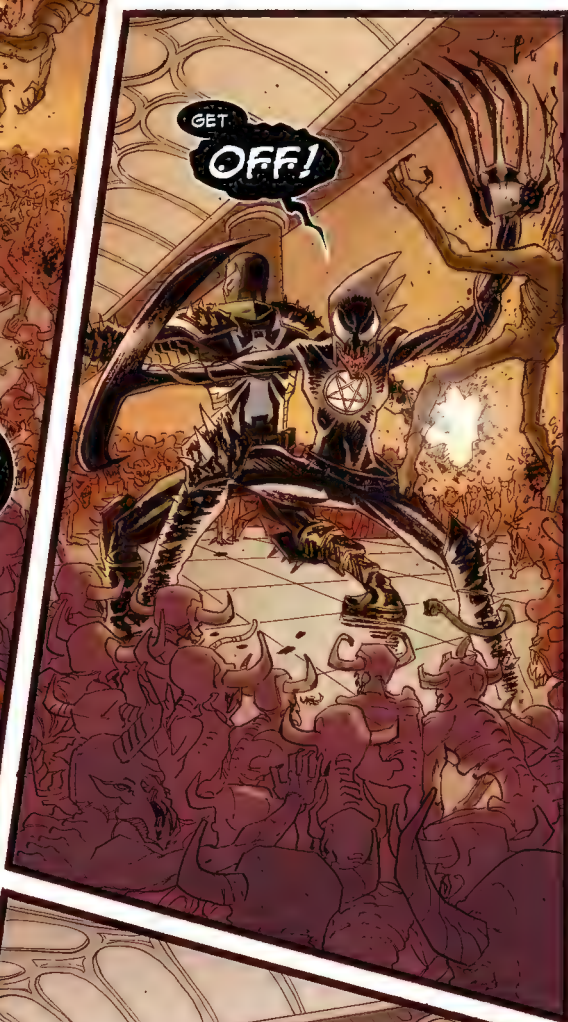
REEEEAARRRGGGK!

BLAM!
BLAM!

SEE?
THIS
IS WHY
YOU NEED TO
LISTEN TO
ME!

CAN YOU
SAVE THE
LECTURES UNTIL
WE'RE NOT
BEING--







Flash Thompson's Apartment.

LATER.

WHAT AM I LOOKING AT, COACH?



I FOUND IT A WHILE AGO. SPOILS OF WAR, I GUESS.

IT HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH DREDGING UP MEMORIES.

I DON'T FULLY UNDERSTAND IT, BUT THAT'S NEVER STOPPED ME BEFORE.



I'M GONNA TRY TO USE IT TO COMMUNICATE WITH THE SYMBIOTE.

OUR CELLS ARE ALL MIXED TOGETHER...MAYBE OUR MEMORIES ARE, TOO.

AND I NEED YOU TO STAND BY. IF SOMETHING GOES WRONG, YOU USE THE CONTENTS OF THIS SYRINGE TO STOP ME.

THIS IS... LIKE...THE WORST PLAN EVER.



PROBABLY. BUT BAD IDEAS ARE MY BREAD AND BUTTER.

THE SYMBIOTE...IT **SHOULDN'T** BE ABLE TO DO THE THINGS IT'S DONE.

WE BOTH NEED TO KNOW IF THERE ARE MORE **SURPRISES** IN STORE.

AND THE MARK?

YOU THINK YOU CAN FIND OUT ABOUT THAT, TOO?

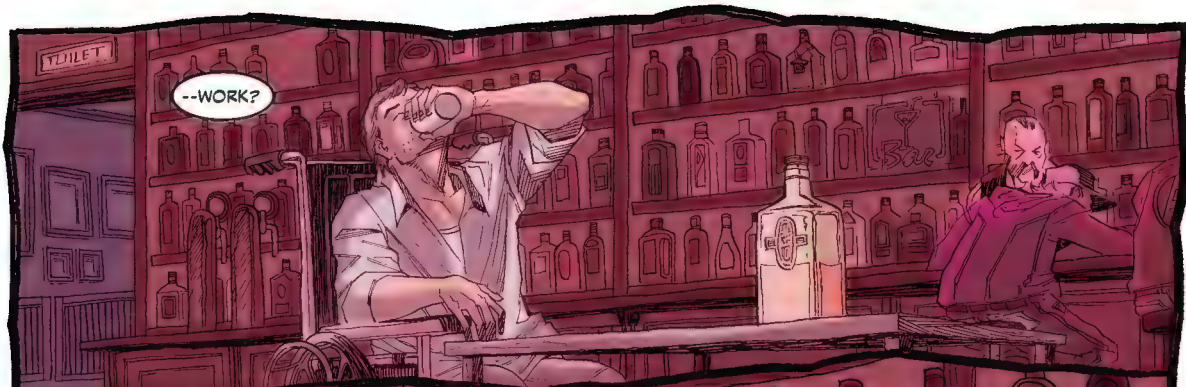


THAT'S THE PLAN. BUT WHO KNOWS?



IT PROBABLY WON'T EVEN--





--WORK?



HELLO?

HELLO?

AM I
ALONE
HERE?

NO.
NEVER
ALONE.

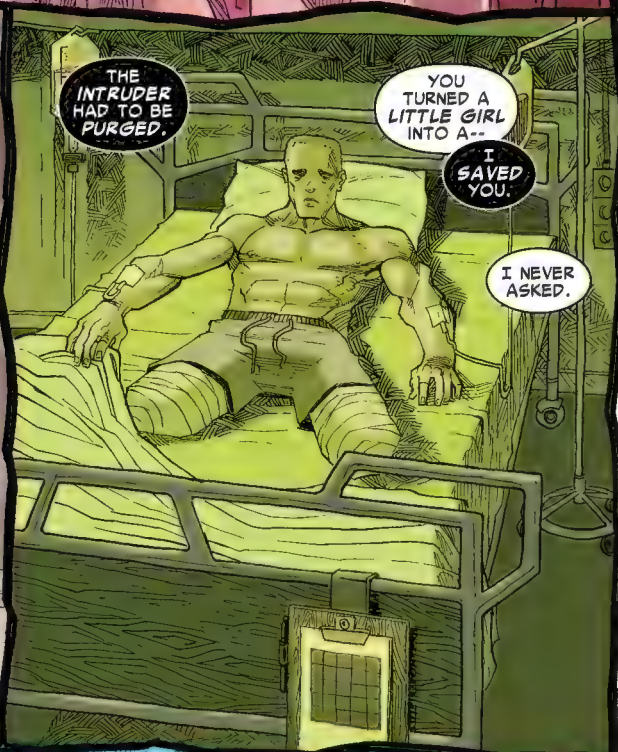


DO
YOU KNOW
WHY I'M
HERE?

DO
YOU KNOW
WHAT I'M
DOING?

YES.

SO
MUCH HAS
CHANGED.
I DON'T
UNDERSTAND
HOW YOU
CREATED--



THE
INTRUDER
HAD TO BE
PURGED.

YOU
TURNED A
LITTLE GIRL
INTO A--

I
SAVED
YOU.

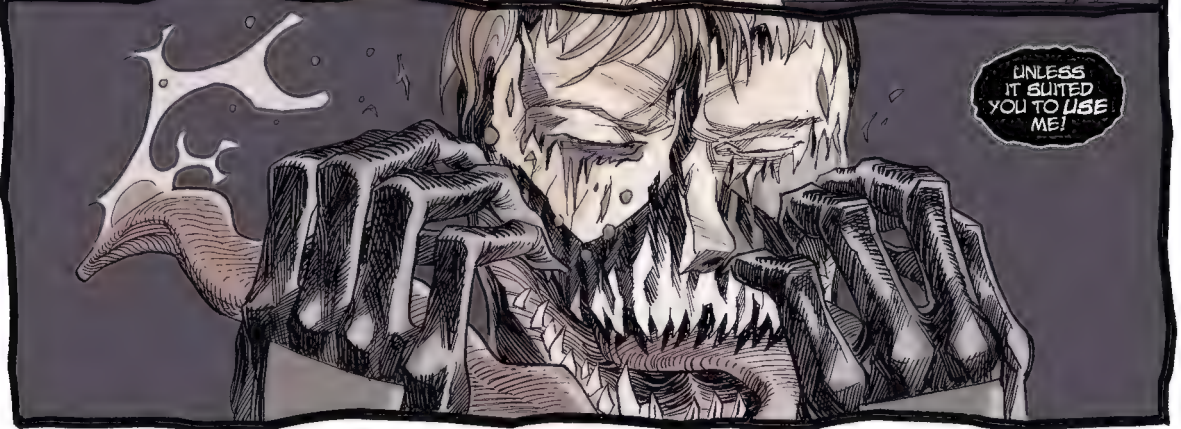
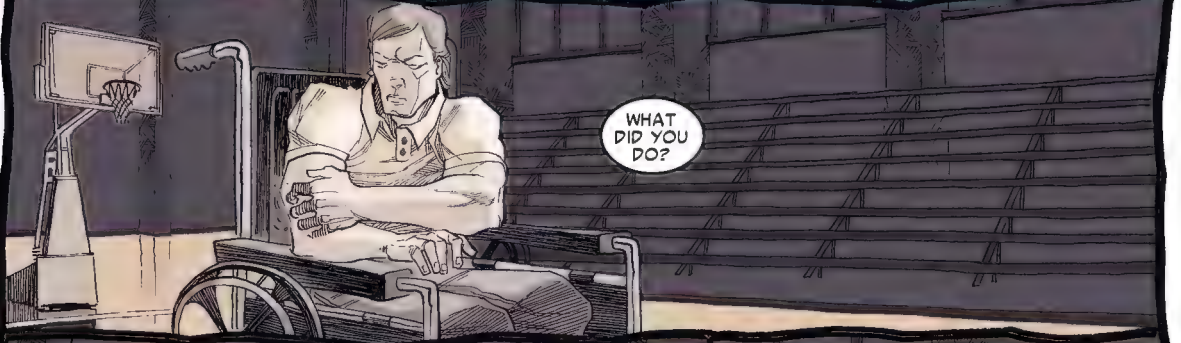
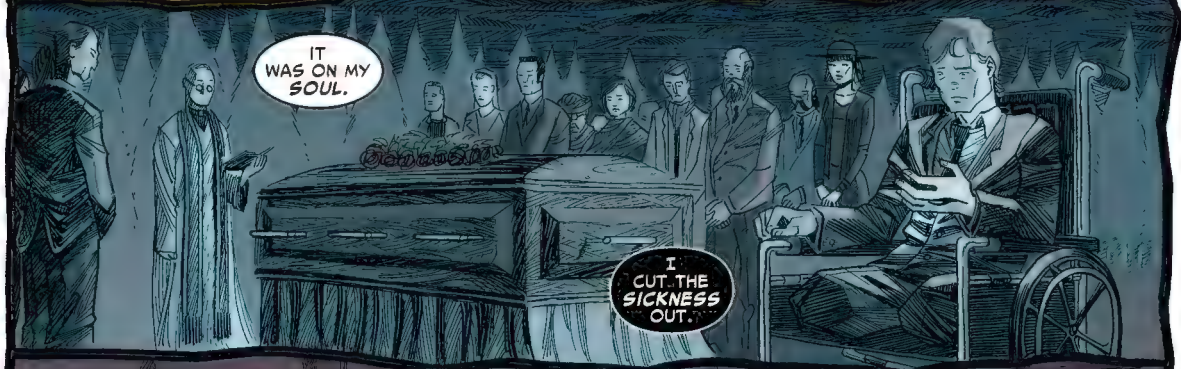
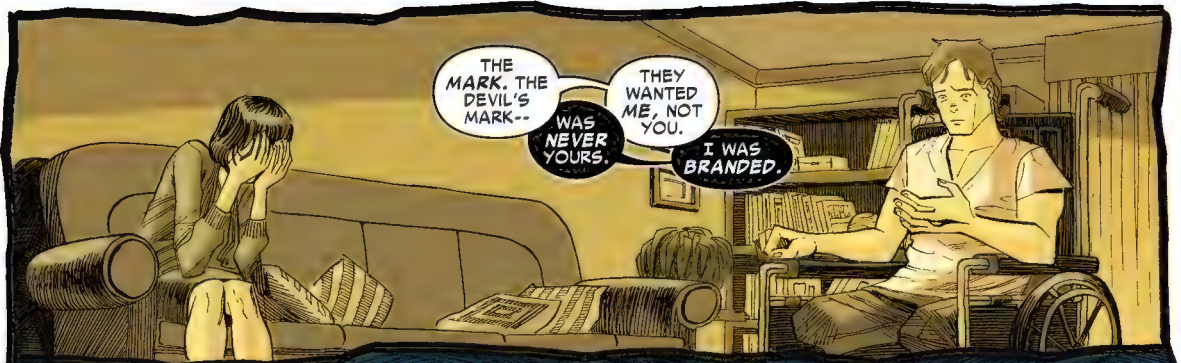
I NEVER
ASKED.

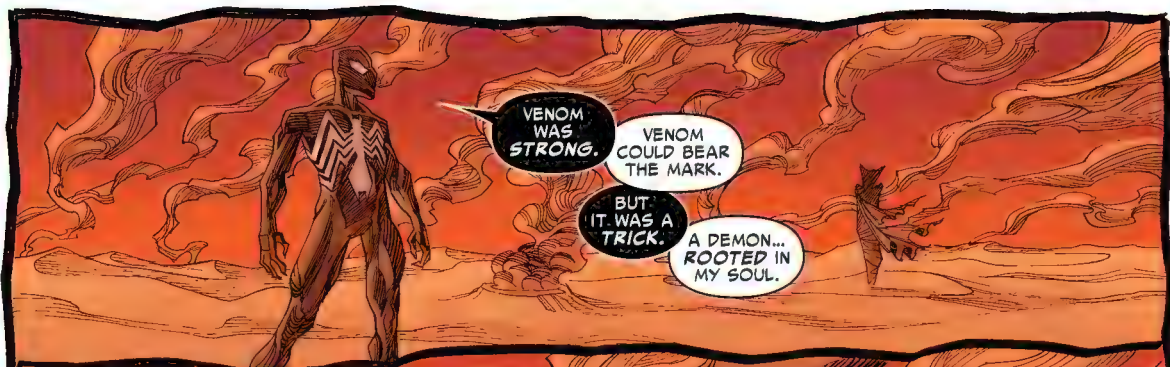


YOU
COULDN'T WALK
AND I GAVE
YOU LEGS.

YOU
WERE TRAPPED
AND I SET
YOU FREE.

I GAVE
YOU STRENGTH
WHEN YOU HAD
NONE.





VENOM
WAS
STRONG.

VENOM
COULD BEAR
THE MARK.

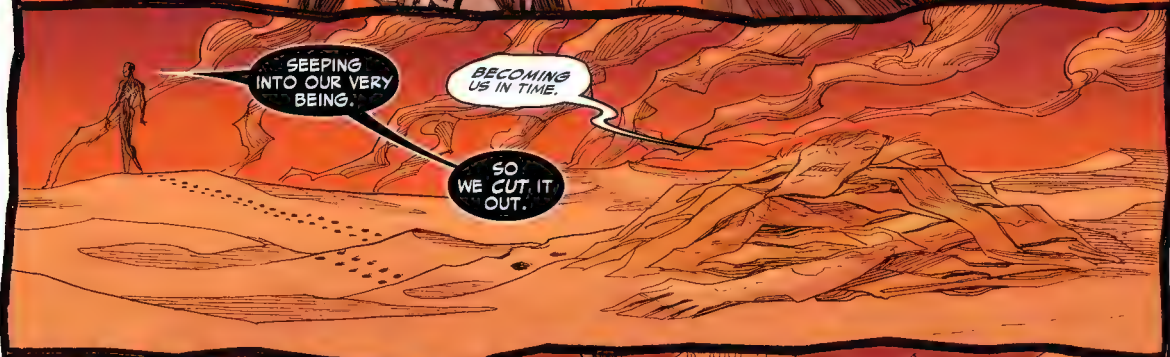
BUT
IT WAS A
TRICK.

A DEMON...
ROOTED IN
MY SOUL.



THE
MARK HOLDS
THE DEMON
AT BAY...

...BUT
ONLY FOR SO
LONG.



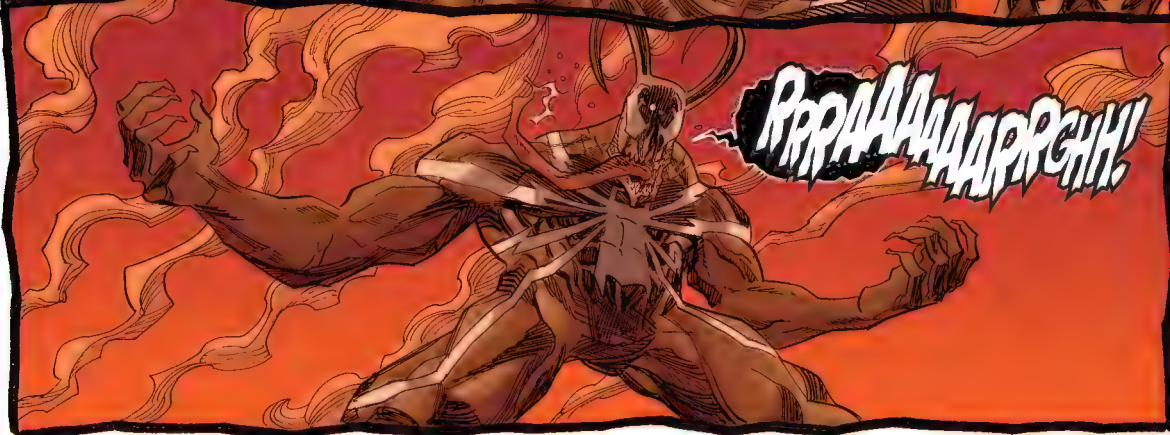
SEEPING
INTO OUR VERY
BEING.

BECOMING
US IN TIME.

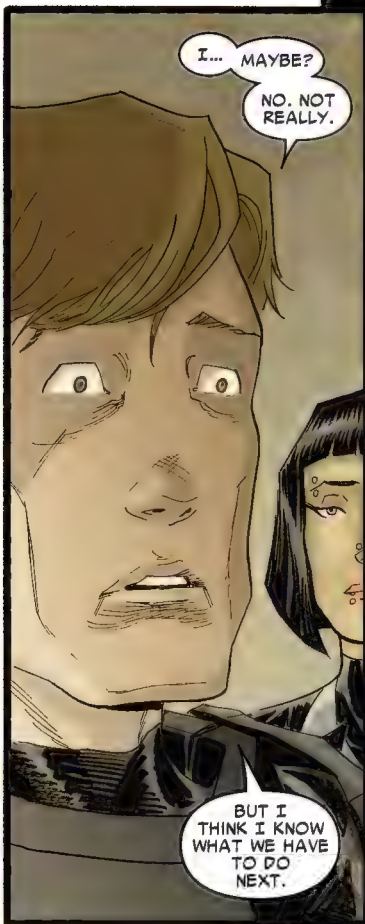
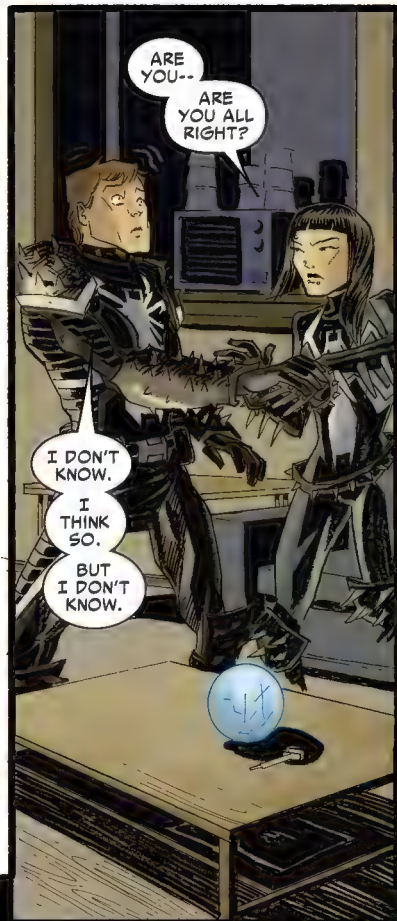
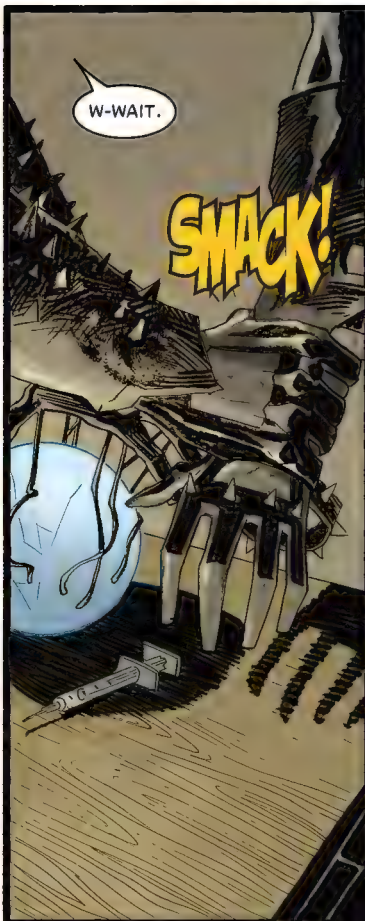
SO
WE CUT IT
OUT.



EXPUL
THE DISEASE
BEFORE IT'S
TOO LATE!



RRRAAAAAARRGH!!



To Be Continued...

SYMBIOWROTE

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EXEC. PRODUCER

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NEXT!



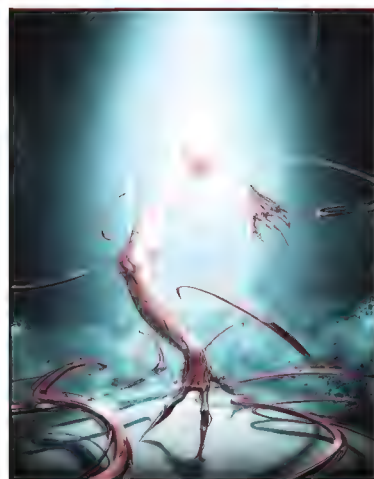
ALSO ON SALE:



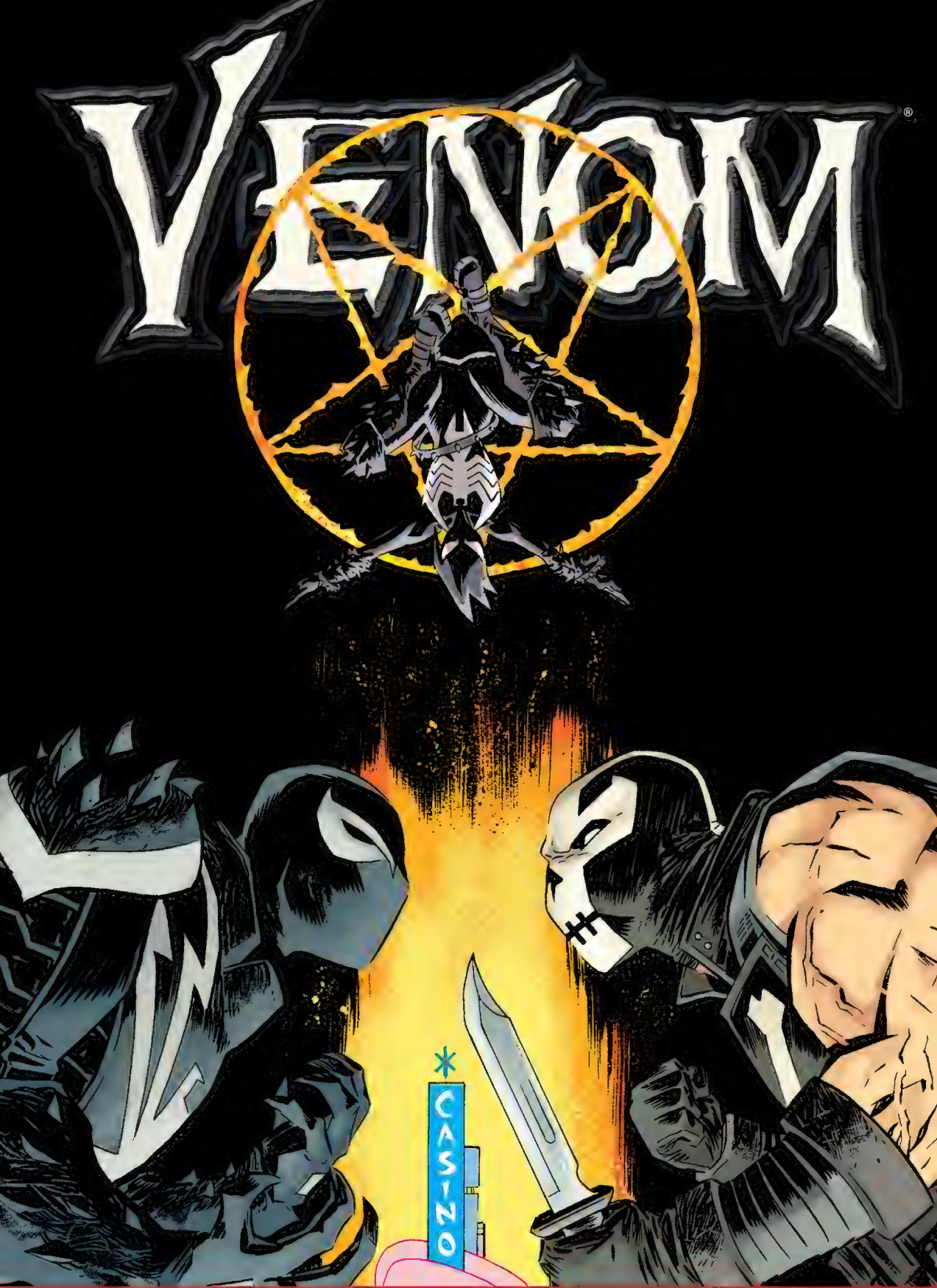
SUPERIOR SPIDER-MAN #18



MORBIUS THE LIVING VAMPIRE #9



SUPERIOR CARNAGE #3



MARVEL

**BUNN
COELHO
LOUGHRIDGE**

042

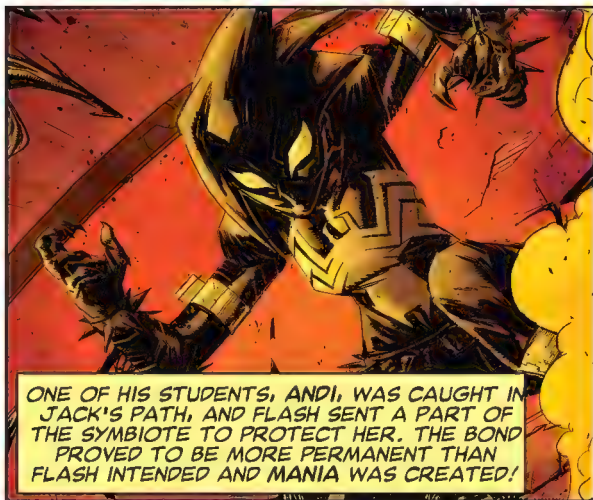
Eugene "Flash" Thompson was a high school bully turned war hero, inspired by the Amazing Spider-Man to get his act together. When he lost both legs in combat, his country gave him a chance to serve again, bonding him with the alien parasite suit that grants its host powers similar to Spider-Man. From that day on, he was the Secret Avenger known as...

VENOM

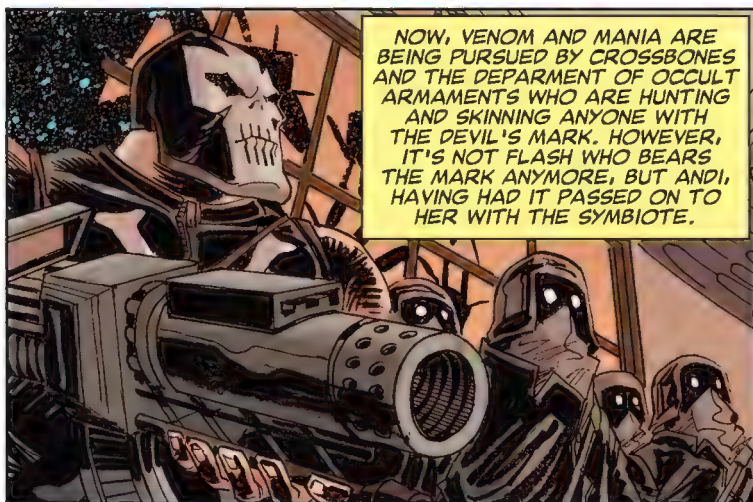


PREVIOUSLY...

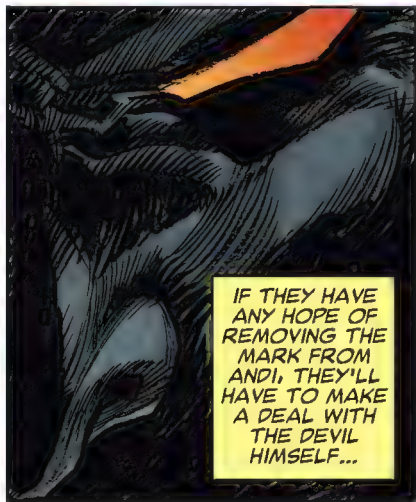
FLASH THOMPSON IS LIVING IN PHILADELPHIA AS A GYM TEACHER, BUT THAT DIDN'T STOPPED SOME OF HIS ENEMIES FROM FOLLOWING HIM- INCLUDING, JACK O'LANTERN.



ONE OF HIS STUDENTS, ANDI, WAS CAUGHT IN JACK'S PATH, AND FLASH SENT A PART OF THE SYMBIOTE TO PROTECT HER. THE BOND PROVED TO BE MORE PERMANENT THAN FLASH INTENDED AND MANIA WAS CREATED!



NOW, VENOM AND MANIA ARE BEING PURSUED BY CROSSBONES AND THE DEPARTMENT OF OCCULT ARMAMENTS WHO ARE HUNTING AND SKINNING ANYONE WITH THE DEVIL'S MARK. HOWEVER, IT'S NOT FLASH WHO BEARS THE MARK ANYMORE, BUT ANDI, HAVING HAD IT PASSED ON TO HER WITH THE SYMBIOTE.



IF THEY HAVE ANY HOPE OF REMOVING THE MARK FROM ANDI, THEY'LL HAVE TO MAKE A DEAL WITH THE DEVIL HIMSELF...

MANIA conclusion

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letters

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ALAN FINE
exec. producer

Atlantic City,
New Jersey.



THERE'S A
JOKE IN HERE
SOMEWHERE.



A RUINED CASINO...
THE TWO OF US
TAKING A CHANCE
JUST BY WALKING
THROUGH THE
DOOR.

YEAH, WELL I
DON'T FEEL LIKE
LAUGHING.

THIS BUSINESS
WITH THE DEVIL'S
MARK...THE DESCENT...
STARTED IN A PLACE
NOT TOO DIFFERENT
THAN THIS.



ALTHOUGH...
THE LAST PLACE
WAS IN BETTER
SHAPE.

AND THAT
WAS IN THE
CENTER OF
HELL.

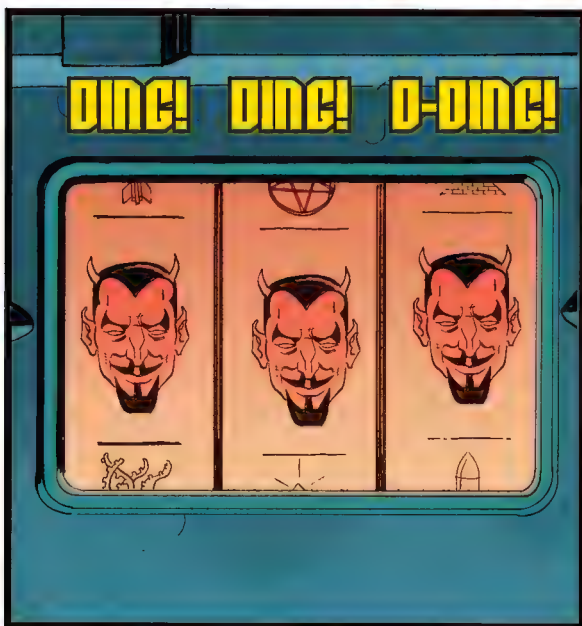


DOESN'T
MATTER.

THIS IS
WHERE IT
ENDS.

BY
PLAYING THE
SLOTS?



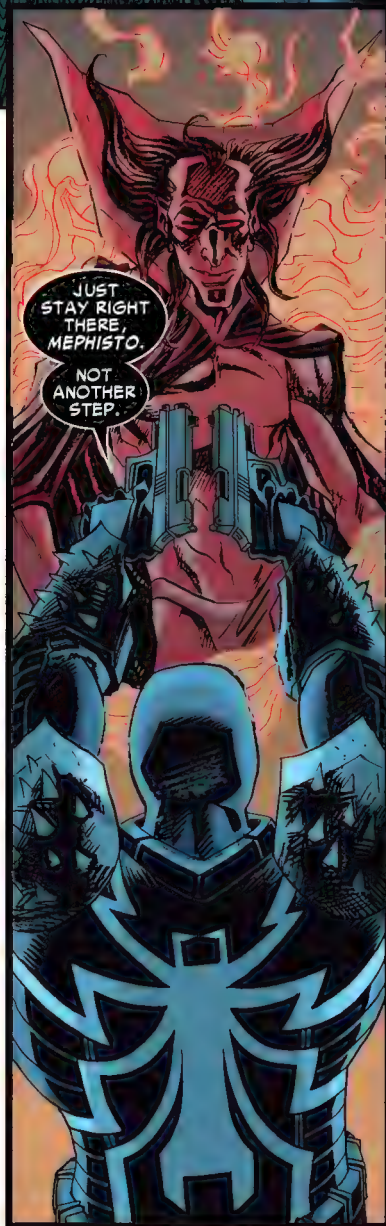


AH, MISTER THOMPSON!

YOU SIMPLY CANNOT STAY AWAY FROM DENS OF INIQUITY, CAN YOU?

YOUR TRAGIC LITTLE LIFE KEEPS DRAGGING YOU BACK TO SLEAZE-PITS LIKE THIS.

YOU'RE MY KIND OF LOSER!



JUST STAY RIGHT THERE, MEPHISTO.

NOT ANOTHER STEP.



OH, PLEASE.

YOU CAME HERE LOOKING FOR ME, DIDN'T YOU?

PUT THE WEAPONS AWAY AND LET'S CHAT LIKE CIVILIZED FOLK.



YOU'RE THE DEVIL, RIGHT?

YOU LIKE STRIKING BARGAINS...OR MAKING BLOOD OATHS...OR SEALING DEALS.

SO HERE'S A DEAL FOR YOU.

REMOVE THIS...BRAND... YOU'VE PUT ON MY SOUL...

...AND ME AND MY GYM TEACHER HERE WON'T STOMP A MUD HOLE IN YOUR SORRY CARCASS.



UH...
YEAH.
WHAT
SHE
SAID.

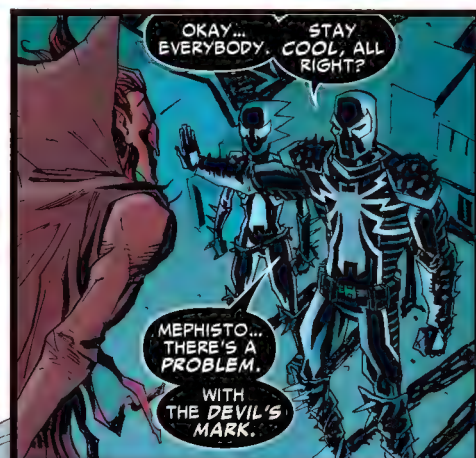


**HAHA
HAHA
HAHAHA
HAHA
HA**



OH
REALLY?

JUST WHO
DO YOU THINK
YOU'RE DEALING
WITH, LITTLE
GIRL?



OKAY...
EVERYBODY. COOL, ALL
RIGHT?

MEPHISTO...
THERE'S A
PROBLEM.
WITH
THE DEVIL'S
MARK.

"YOU BRANDED ME WITH
IT BACK WHEN ALL HELL
BROKE LOOSE IN VEGAS..."

"...AND PICKED
ME AS ONE OF
YOUR POSSIBLE
SUCCESSORS."

AS SEEN IN "CIRCLE OF
FOUR" IN VENOM 13-14!
- SYMBIOTIC SANA

"AND THERE'S THE
ISSUE... BECAUSE
I'M NOT MARKED
ANYMORE."





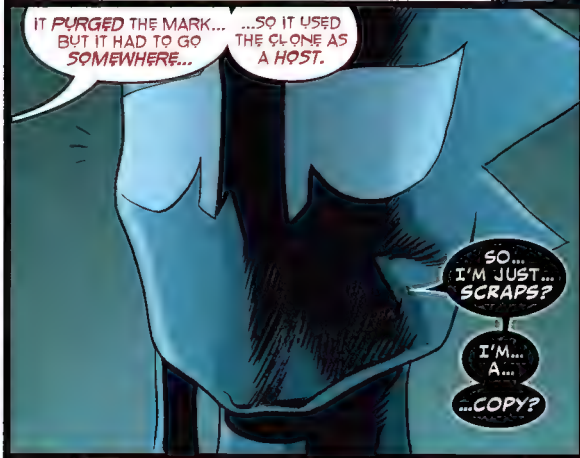
THIS GIRL...
SHE BEARS THE MARK NOW.
HE CAN CALL ME MANIA.



I SEE.
IT WOULD SEEM THAT YOUR OTHERWORLDLY SYMBIOTE HAS SOME UNEXPECTED TRICKS UP ITS SLEEVE.
OR SHOULD I SAY...
...IN ITS FLESH.

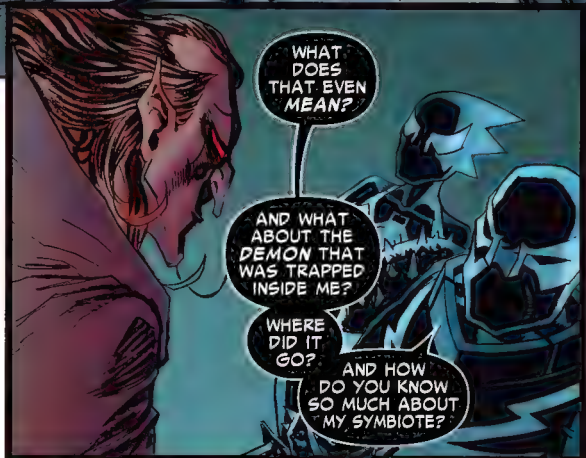
"SOME TIME AGO, IT ABSORBED SOMETHING...ITS OWN CLONE.

"AND IT WOULD SEEM THAT IT WAS ABLE TO SPIT IT BACK OUT...WITH THE DEVIL'S MARK."



IT PURGED THE MARK... BUT IT HAD TO GO SOMEWHERE...
...SO IT USED THE CLONE AS A HOST.

SO... I'M JUST... SCRAPES?
I'M... A...
...COPY?



WHAT DOES THAT EVEN MEAN?
AND WHAT ABOUT THE DEMON THAT WAS TRAPPED INSIDE ME?
WHERE DID IT GO?
AND HOW DO YOU KNOW SO MUCH ABOUT MY SYMBIOTE?



I'D LOVE TO MELT YOUR PEA-SIZED BRAIN WITH ANSWERS RIGHT NOW.
I REALLY WOULD.
BUT I'M AFRAID IT WILL HAVE TO WAIT.



BRAKKA! BRAKKA! BRAKKA!
BRAKKA! BRAKKA! BRAKKA!

YEAH.
AND THIS
TIME THEY BROUGHT
REINFORCEMENTS.

BURN 'EM
DOWN!
LEAVE
JUST ENOUGH
SO WE CAN PICK
THE DEVIL'S MARK
FROM THE GIRL'S
BONES!

BRAKKA!

**BLAM!
BLAM!
BLAM!**

BRAKKA!

BRAKKA! BRAKKA!
BRAKKA! BRAKKA!



BRAKKA! BRAKKA!

BLAM!

AND
WHERE THE
HELL DID
MEPHISTO--

Aghh!

YEEEEAGGGH!

STALKED
BY FREAKS...

...WITH
ASSAULT
RIFLES...

...AND
THEY WANT
TO SKIN
ME...

GET
A HOLD OF
YOURSELF,
ANDI.

THE SUIT
WILL PROTECT
YOU FROM MOST
OF THE SMALL
ARMS FIRE...
HEAL YOU.

...BUT THAT
HEAVY ARTILLERY
CAN RIP YOU TO
SHREDS.

LET'S
TAKE THESE
GUYS DOWN
BEFORE THAT
HAPPENS.

VIP!
VIP!
V-VIP!

THIS IS
WHY I TRY TO
STAY THE HELL
OUT OF
ATLANTIC
CITY!

KRANK!

KRAK!

SNAP!



AS A KID, I
WANTED TO BE
AN **ALL-STAR**.

I WANTED THE FANS, THE
RING, AND THE STRING
OF ATHLETIC SHOE AND
BREAKFAST FOOD
ENDORSEMENTS.



AS I GOT OLDER,
I DREAMED OF
FOLLOWING IN MY
IDOL'S FOOTSTEPS...

...BECOMING AN
HONEST-TO-
GOODNESS **SUPER**
HERO...



...EVEN THOUGH
I'VE NEVER REALLY
UNDERSTOOD
WHAT THAT MEANT.

AND IF I COULDN'T
BE A **SUPER HERO**, I
JUST WANTED TO
SERVE MY COUNTRY.



THE ONE THING I
NEVER WANTED TO
BE, THOUGH, WAS A
FATHER.

MY OLD MAN
CURED ME OF
ANY **PARENTAL**
ASPIRATIONS
EARLY ON.



SO WHILE SHE MAY
NOT BE MY KID, SHE'S
SURE AS HELL MY
RESPONSIBILITY.

WE
AREN'T DONE
WITH YOU
YET!

AND ANYONE WHO
TRIES TO DO HER
HARM WILL HAVE TO
GET THROUGH ME.

ALL THOSE DREAMS
OF MINE...ALL THOSE
ASPIRATIONS...

SLASH!

...EACH AND EVERY
ONE OF 'EM CRASHED
DOWN AROUND ME
THANKS TO THE OL'
THOMPSON LUCK.

AND WHEN THE
DREAMS DIDN'T COME
TRUE, I JUST WANTED
TO FORGET.

SO I DRANK.

CRASH!

BUT NOT
ANYMORE...BECAUSE
I'VE GOT SOMETHING
TO REMIND ME...

SKKRRREEEEAAAK

...A
RESPONSIBILITY
I CAN'T TURN MY
BACK ON...

...AND
THAT MEANS
FIGHTING...

...TIL YOUR KNUCKLES
ARE RAW AND THE
ONLY THING YOU CAN
TASTE IS YOUR OWN
SWEAT AND BLOOD...

DON'T
JUST STAND
THERE, YA
SORRY SACK!

YER
SUPPOSED TO
BE OUR MAGICAL
BACKUP!

I DON'T
HEAR SOME
ABRACADABRAS
COMING OUTTA
YER PIE
HOLE--

--AND I
MEAN RIGHT
THIS @##%%##
SECOND--

--I'M
GONNA FEED
YOU TO THOSE
THINGS.

B-BUT...MY
DEMONS...

THEY...
THEY
TURNED
ON ME.

TRAGIC,
ISN'T IT?

WHEN YOUR
UNDERLINGS
BETRAY YOU.

WHU--



MEPHISTO!

PLEASE,
SPARE ME YOUR
PLATITUDES.

YOU'RE ONE
OF THE ENTROPY
CELL. AREN'T YOU?
PANDEMONIUM'S
DISCIPLE, MASTER
MAYHEM...

SUCH
A GRAND
EXPERIMENT,
YOU AND YOUR
KIND.

AND THAT'S
WHY IT IS SO
DISAPPOINTING
TO SEE YOU MUCKING
AROUND WITH
MY PLANS.

TRYING TO
HARVEST DEVIL'S
MARKS FROM
MY CHOSEN.



MY...MY
LORD.

WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING
HERE?

IF I HAD
KNOWN...I
WOULD HAVE
BROUGHT AN
OFFERING.



ALTHOUGH
YOU'LL STILL
PROVE USEFUL
TO ME.



TSK-
BAD
BOY.

NNRRREAAAAGH!

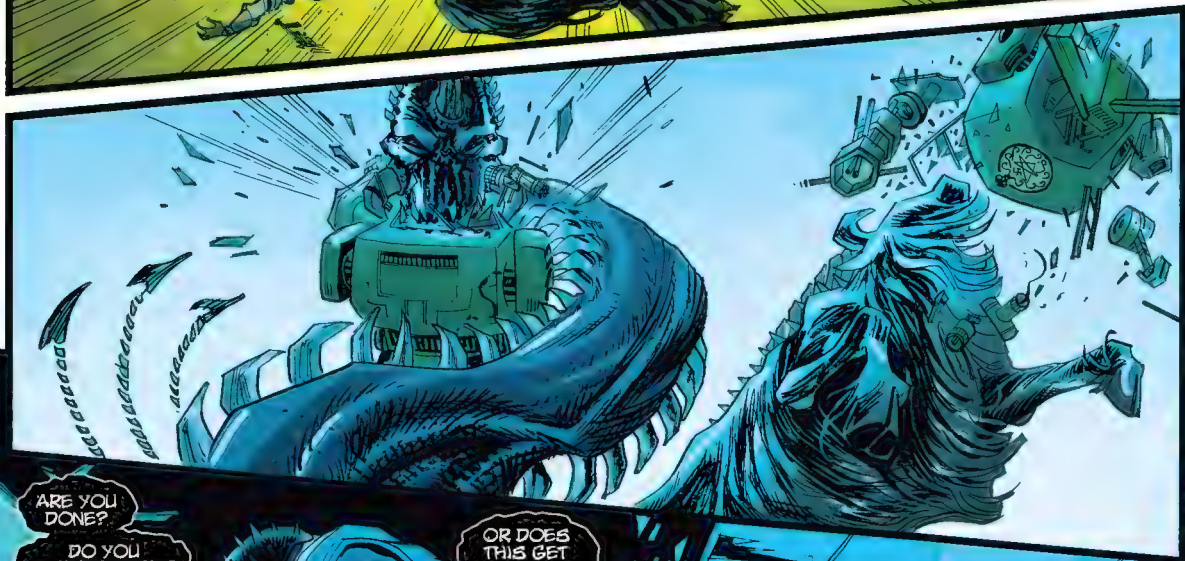


KR-KRAK
SNAP!



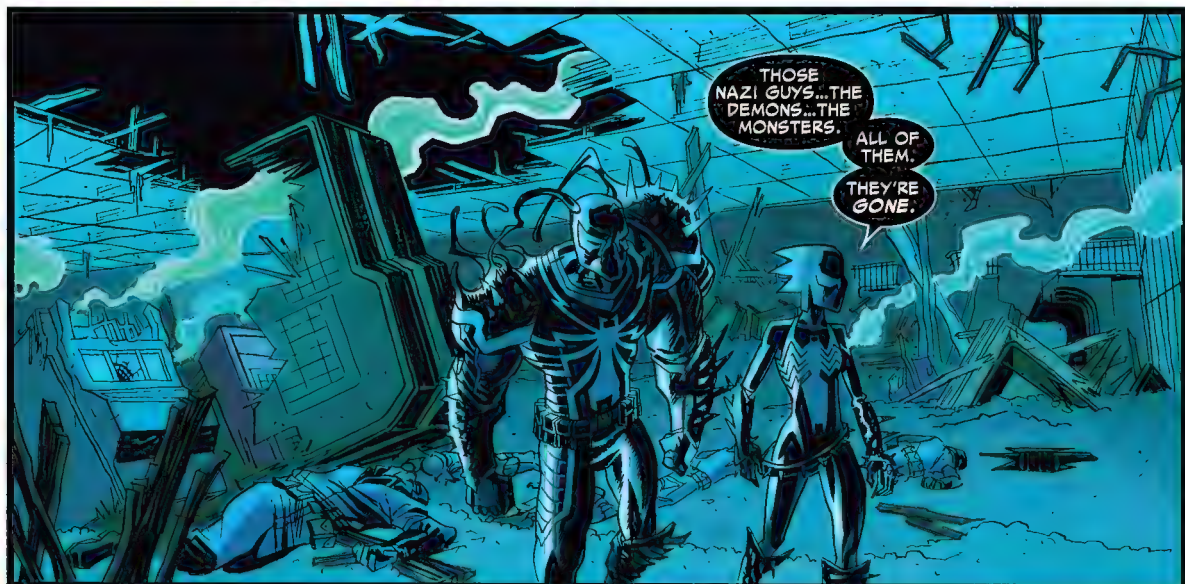
RISE...
...MONSTERS
OF EVIL!





ARE YOU
DONE?
DO YOU
SURRENDER?

OR DOES
THIS GET
MESSIER?





THAT WASN'T SMART, FLASH, DEAR BOY.

SUCH AN INSULT...I SHOULD FILET YOU WHERE YOU STAND.

BUT IT WOULD SEEM THAT WE HAVE MUTUAL ENEMIES...AND THEY HAVE DESIGNS ON DEAR MANIA HERE.

SHE NEEDS YOU... AND SO, TOO, DO I.

I SPARE YOU ONLY SO YOU CAN CONTINUE TO ACT AS HER GUARDIAN.



WAIT. HOLD ON.

WHAT ABOUT THE DEMON VENOM MENTIONED? THE ONE THAT WAS TRAPPED INSIDE HIM?

IS IT IN ME NOW?

AND HOW CAN I BE MARKED IF I NEVER MADE ANY DEAL WITH YOU?

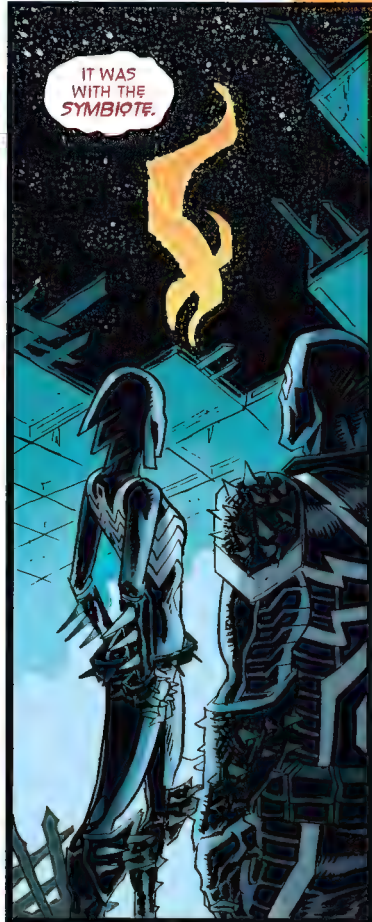


SO MANY QUESTIONS.

BUT I'M AFRAID YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY BLEEDING HEART ON MY SCHEDULE.

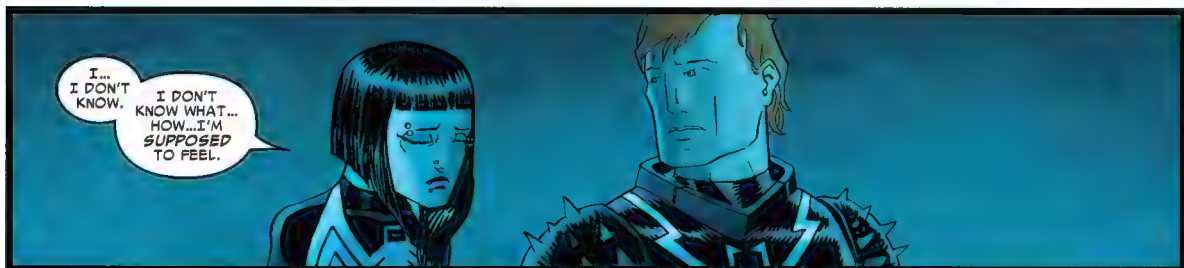
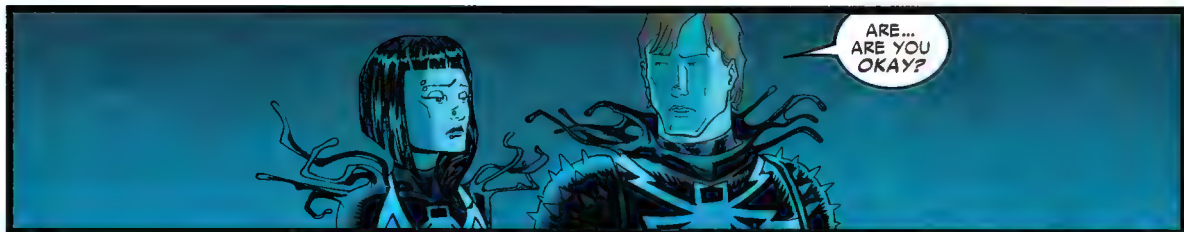
I'LL LEAVE YOU WITH THIS, THOUGH.

MY ORIGINAL BARGAIN...THE ONE THAT MARKED VENOM...WAS NOT WITH FLASH.



IT WAS WITH THE SYMBIOTE.





SYMBIOWROTE

SANA AMANAT
EDITOR

STEPHEN WACKER
SENIOR EDITOR

AXEL ALONSO
EDITOR IN CHIEF

JOE QUESADA
CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER

DAN BUCKLEY
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ALAN FINE
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Send e-mail to SPIDEYOFFICE@MARVEL.COM
(please mark as OKAY TO PRINT)

Since his introduction in *The Amazing Spider-Man* #299 from April 1988, Venom has been a one of Spider-Man's most recognizable and popular villains. After 25 years, the symbiotic psycho has come a long way, and has a new life all his own in Philadelphia. From his new nemesis, Jack O' Lantern, to the latest symbiote to join Marvel U, Mania, Venom's family is continuing to grow -- and that includes you readers, too! So, after the longest solo-running Venom series yet, here're your letters!

I'm very disappointed to hear of Venom's cancellation. It is the book I look forward to the most every month. Flash is my favorite Spider-lad, he is easy to relate to. I can't relate to Spock or Kaine as easily as I could to Flash. He is a hero for all those who came from broken homes and manages to overcome it. I found Agent Venom pretty inspiring in that way. I really wish I could continue seeing him as the star of a series.

One Sad Venom Fan
Rachel Collier

Symbiowrote,

This last hurrah of the current Venom series has been very impressive. I have been enjoying the adventures of Flash and my favorite symbiote, and if the series has to end I am glad that it is ending on a great note. (Although I am hoping and praying that the end of this series somehow sees the Venom symbiote end up back with Brock. I long for more stories circa the Lethal Protector days.)

Issue 41 had some great dialogue that you really deserve kudos on. The reaction to Venom tossing the bomb into the wizard's demon portal/cloak was laugh out loud funny. Even better was the "conversation" between Flash and the symbiote. That was chilling and definitely made me feel for the symbiote. It was fantastic to see it FINALLY get some personality; to see it comment on how it has been treated over the course of this series.

Thank you for a great Marvel Comic. Please keep up the good work wherever you guys end up next.

Ross Griswold
Des Moines, Iowa

I just wanted to drop a very quick note to say how much I have enjoyed this series of VENOM, I've been with it since issue #1 (from Rick Remender) and I was a little concerned when Cullen Bunn took over but he has not let me down and, if anything he has actually *improved* on the work started by Mr. Remender.

If you had told me 5 years ago that I would of like a VENOM series at all (nevermind one which does not even have Eddie Brock as the host of the symbiote) I would of called you mad but it has happened.

I am very sorry to see this cancelled but I hope to see a relaunch in MARVEL NOW PHASE 2.

I am aware that Flash appears in THUNDERBOLTS but I am not a fan of that series (I was, of the original series, but not since the relaunch...) and I hope I will be able to enjoy Flash as Venom in some other title on a monthly basis (I am not counting his up-coming guest stint in SUPERIOR SPIDER-MAN).

I also hope that Mania can find a home

as I feel Mr Bunn has created an interesting character.

Really, all I can say now is thank you to Mr. Bunn and Mr. Remender before him and I hope to see more work from you soon, hopefully in a relaunch!

I also hope Mania can find a home and does not wind up in limbo (assuming, of course, that she survives her debut arc!)

James Hunter
England

I was totally bummed to hear that Venom is ending! This run is one that far, far exceeded my expectations. I was honestly never a huge fan of Venom, and yet with Flash under the mask, it quickly became one of my favorite ongoing books. As I look back on the last 40 issues, I honestly don't remember a lot of the action, but I do very much remember Flash's troubles. The alcoholism, depression, Betty, his father, being lonely in a new city...things most of us have had similar experiences to.

Marvel's books are best when they remember that these characters really aren't much different than any of us (if you ignore the fact that they're super-powered masked adventurers). I hope to see more Flash Thompson soon.

David Massimini
Columbus, OH

Dear Marvel,

Venom has always been a series I've played catch-up with. I waited til about the 15th issue before realizing how well-written it was, and as such spent a great deal of time tracking down issues.

I had it on standing order until Minimum Carnage, which I didn't enjoy; hence I dropped the book.

I picked up #40 based purely on the cover alone. "Who is this Mania character?" I wondered.

I was impressed with the story, but not with the news the book is ending with #42.

I know Flash/Venom will continue on with Thunderbolts but I hope this isn't the last time we see Mania.

All the best,
Maarten Bouw
Melbourne Australia.

Andi is my favorite new character to come out of Marvel in years.

Mania is an inspired interpretation of the symbiote concept and I am hard pressed to think of a time when I have been more excited to read the adventures of a teen hero. Between that and the Venom-Mobile I can't imagine how much better this is going to get! Please don't let Andi get killed off quickly like so many teen heroes these days. Is she gonna keep the Pipe Wrench as a signature?

Everett Christensen

Good morning Spider-People!

Just wanted to add my voice to the folks who are crushed to be losing Venom as a solo title. It's the series that first got me started in comics and how I fell in love with Marvel as a (now) thirty year old woman! I've loved reading about Flash's struggle to be a hero and his enemy Jack O'Lantern is the most terrifying Marvel villain I've ever seen. I'm devastated that his story is going to end on a cliffhanger and we might never know what happens between Flash

and dear ol' Jack. I hope Flash/Agent Venom continues to be a visible character across the Marvel U and I'd love to see a restart of his solo series (with Jack in tow!) at some point in the future. :)

Margaret M.

First off let me declare this ..THIS BOOK IS INCREDIBLE! I've been reading Venom since I found my uncle's "Lethal Protector" series in the 90's and, oh, man... I've always loved the struggle between good guy and bad guy -- help Spidey, or crush him? I love how the symbiote affects the people who wear it and I am definitely team FLASH THOMPSON. I've been on this since Issue 1 and not once have I been disappointed -- not once. In the originals, I loved how Venom spawned and made the other symbiotes (Carnage, Riot, Scream, Agony, Lasher, and Purge) and I said, O.M.G. Then, you hit me with Hybrid and Toxin then I got Poison and Anti-Venom and now you folks hit me with Andi's spawn.

I just love the Venom character and story and the constant evolution. Thank you, Marvel and you folks attached to this amazing book I will keep reading so keep printing

Venomously yours
Jay Velasquez

P.S. I love the different artist touching this book all the time. Please, please get JOE MAD! He is so my favorite right now -- his stuff blows my brain!

Marvel,

Flash Thompson as Agent Venom is one of my favorite ongoing. When I heard he was being canceled, I was disappointed.

I would really like if you were to change your mind about canceling the series, relaunch the series keeping Flash as the host for Venom, or keep him on the Thunderbolts.

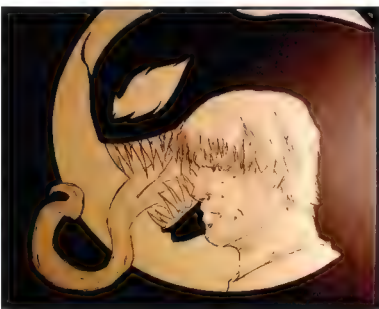
Mania is by far the coolest side kick I've ever seen. I would enjoy seeing Andi and Flash having adventures together.

Nate Lewis

I have to say...Venom is one of my all time favorite titles right now. I just heard the news that it's ending in October and I'm SO MAD!!! Anyway, I'm really sorry to see you guys go, and since this title is ending, I figured I didn't want to procrastinate any longer on telling you how much I love the series. Both the writing and artwork are spot on. You've definitely made me a big fan of Flash!

Tom Chapman

P.S. Here's some of my own artwork as a token of my gratitude...



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As I sit down to write this... my sad farewell to VENOM... I think back on the day I got the call asking me to take over the series. Even before I got off the phone, I was formulating detailed plans and a long overarching story that would cover a lot of ground—an evolving story that would span several years.

I might have been dreaming too big, but that's the curse of someone who loves these characters and concepts as much as I do. Much of the story I envisioned will likely never be fully revealed. Some story elements changed, some were delayed, some got lost in the shuffle, and some were revealed as planned.

In the end, though, readers may never know what I had in mind for the Descent, for Toxin and Mania, for the emergence of an all new Anti-Venom (an idea Declan Shalvey and I geeked out over quite a bit), for the 'war for the symbiote', for Venom's rise to the preeminent hero in Philly, or for the inevitable return of Crime-Master.

Suffice it to say, it would have been a wild ride.

Would I have changed things if I had the chance to do it over? Maybe, but not necessarily. I might have been overzealous or over ambitious. I might have tried to tie together too many existing plot threads. In the end, though, I'm proud of the work I did. And I'm thankful for what I was able to do with the 28 issues I wrote or co-wrote (counting Minimum Carnage and .1 issues).

Twenty-eight issues! The series ran 42+ issues! That's nothing to sneeze at when you consider that this is a book many readers said would never make it past the sixth issue.

Before I sign off, I wanted to take a moment to thank all the fans of the book. I've said it before, but I was a little surprised by how many hardcore symbiote fans there are out there. Your enthusiasm for these characters is delightful and infectious. I also want to thank Rick Remender, Steve Wacker, Tom Brennan, Sana Amanat, and all the artistic folks I worked with over the course of the series. I could fill another 27 issues with all the reasons that you all rock so hard.

And don't be too sad for the end of the series, symbiote fans! The great thing about the Marvel Universe is that the show goes on even after the end of a series. I know some of the plans that are in store for Venom, and it's pretty exciting stuff! And while I'm not writing Venom any more, I'm not quite done with symbiotes. Stay tuned.

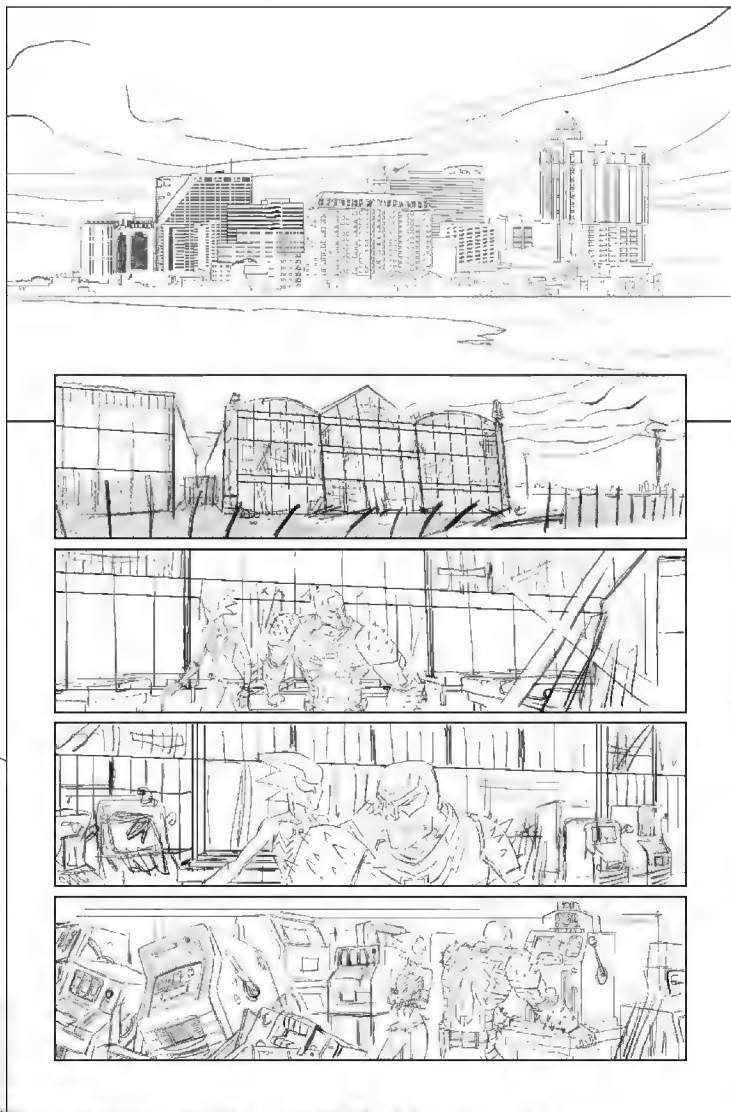
-Cullen Bunn



**VENOM WILL RETURN in
SUPERIOR SPIDER-MAN #22**

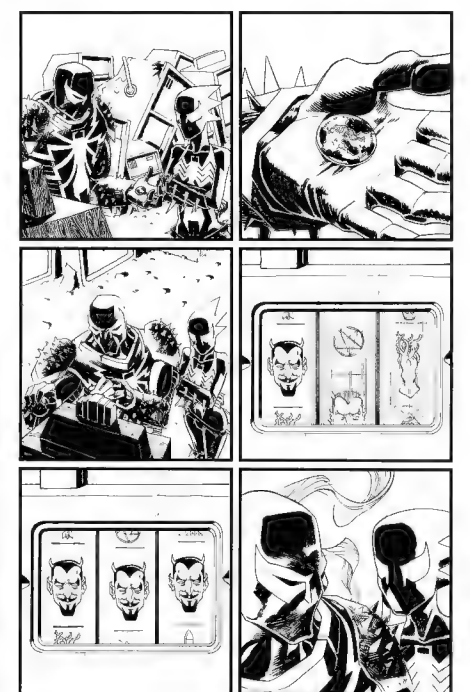
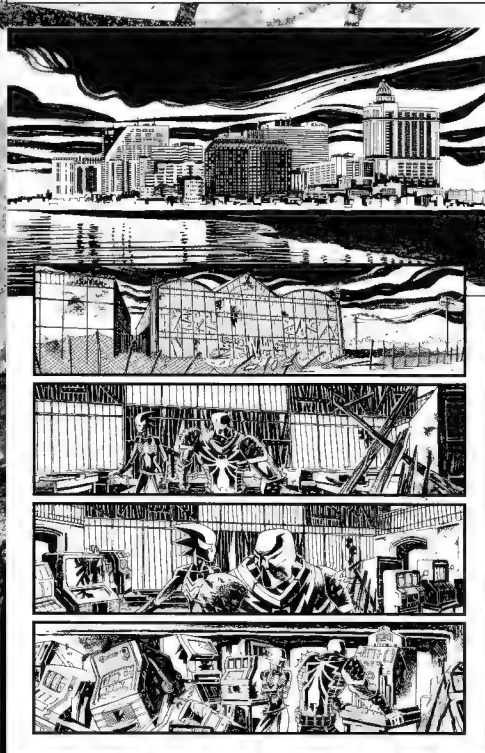


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PENCILS AND INKS
by Jorge Coelho

#42 PAGE 2
PENCILS AND INKS
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#42 PAGE 3
PENCILS AND INKS
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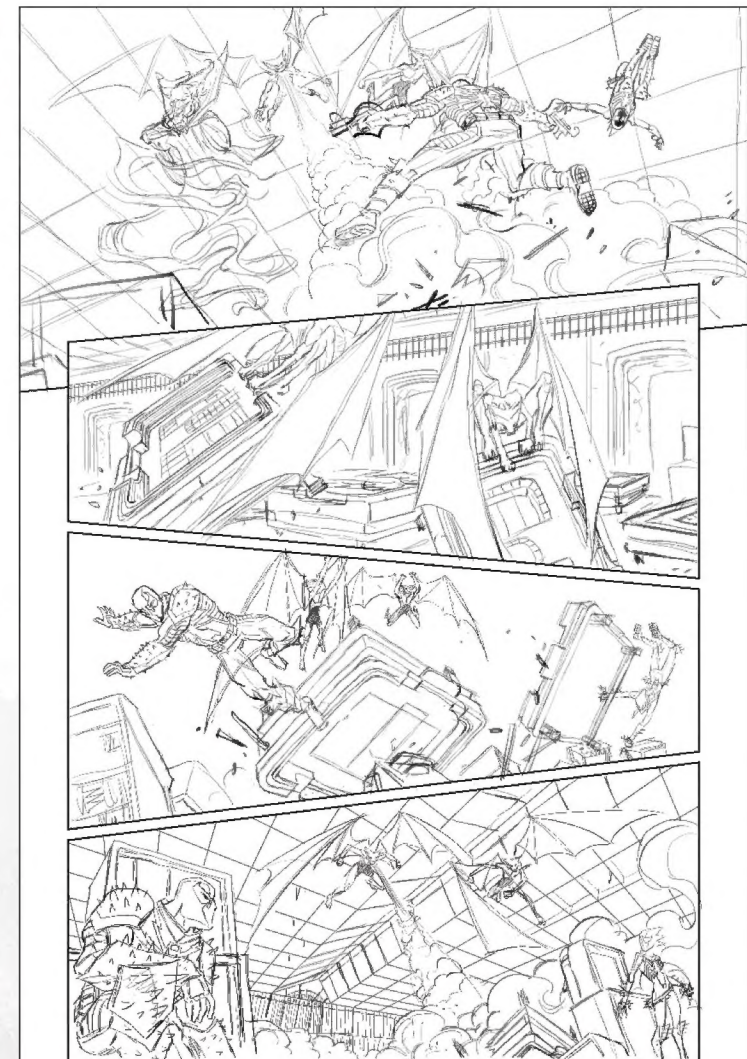
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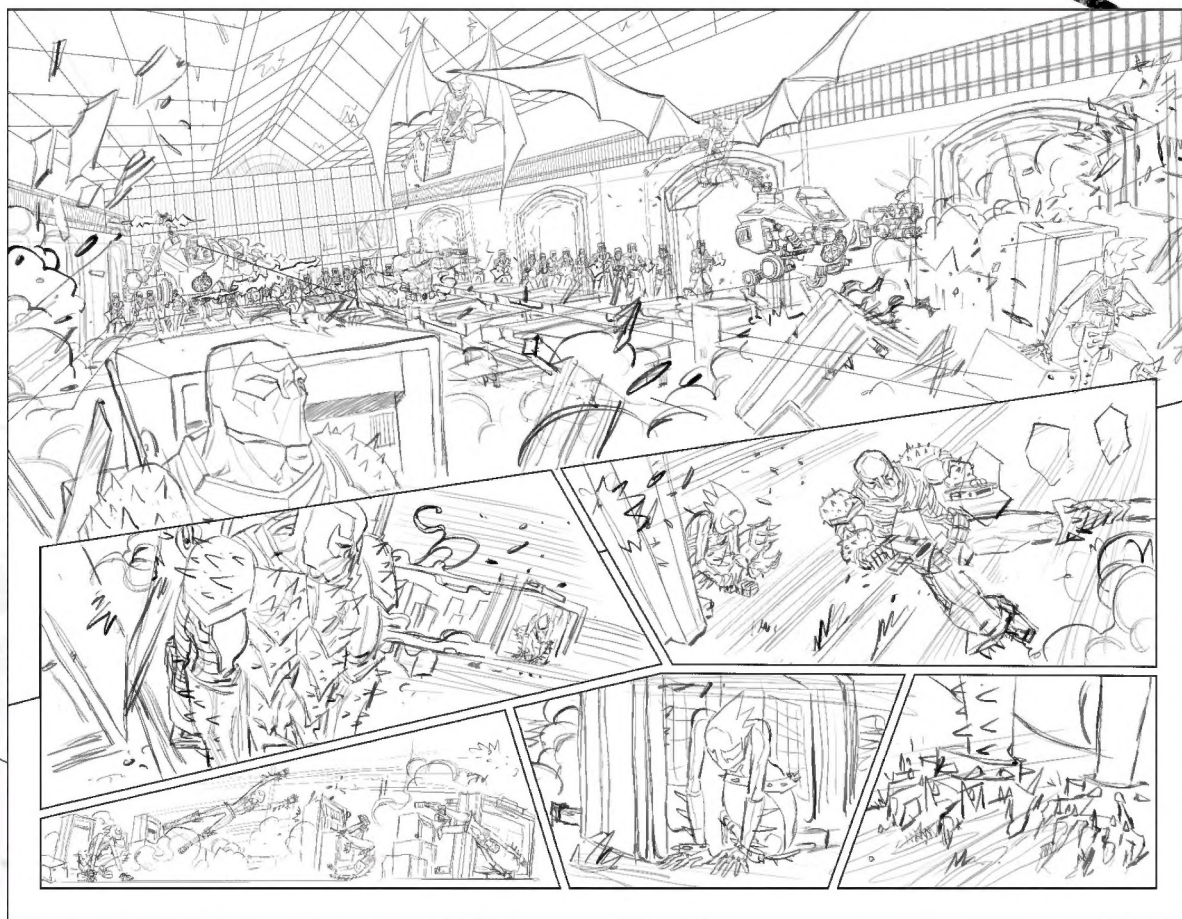


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#42 PAGE 6
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#42 PAGES 7 & 8
PENCILS AND INKS

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PHILADELPHIA FINALLY GETS THE HERO IT NEVER WANTED!

Agent Venom hits the town for some good, old-fashioned crime-busting — but crime busts back when Lord Ogre, leader of Philadelphia's underworld, declares war on the city's would-be hero! Cold-blooded killers crawl out of the woodwork to collect on the contract put out for Venom's head — and when his secret identity is discovered, Flash Thompson needs all the help he can find just to survive. To complicate matters, a new symbiote-powered entity joins the fray when Flash's heroics lead to the inadvertent birth of Mania! But can this new danger be wrangled, and is she friend or foe?



Collecting *Venom* #27.1 and #36-42.



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